

**Adolescent Identity Formation Curriculum
in the Korean Youth Cultural Context**

**A Professional Project
presented to
the Faculty of the
Claremont School of Theology**

**In Partial Fulfillment
of the Requirements for the Degree
Doctor of Ministry**

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May 1998**

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*has been presented to and accepted by the Faculty of the
School of Theology at Claremont in partial fulfillment of the
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ABSTRACT

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Christian education can empower students to be fully alive in harmful surroundings. Moreover the educator's role is to lead youth to identify who they are in the midst of danger. This is the preliminary assumption for this project. Christian educators make great efforts to get in touch with youth and help them to become fully Christian. In spite of sincere effort by teachers and educators, however, a great number of youth leave the church today. One of the main reasons is that the educators do not see the importance of the cultural context of the youth. This project emphasizes the importance of understanding youth culture and ministering in relation to the distinctive gifts and needs of youth. By so doing, churches can help youth grow in their Christian identity, faith and vision.

Based on that assumption, the project presents a model of adolescent identity formation curriculum. The first half of the project deals with a study of Korean youth culture, youth development theory, and youth identity formation theory. These sections are firm bases of the identity formation curriculum. In addition, the curriculum theory of Campbell Wyckoff as well as the traditioning theory of Mary Elizabeth Moore are theological bases for the author's practical program (identity formation curriculum). The practical identity formation program includes five major themes: encountering God, enlarging relationships with others, experiencing the present reign of God,

engaging in the pain of the earth, and envisioning the future. These themes imply that identity formation in the present is deeply related to people's experience of the past and envisioning of the future. Finally, the theory of *Basileia* and *Ecclesia* of Joon Kwan Un also provides insight to pursuing the vision of youth ministry.

Youth ministry is neither an easy work nor a sweet dream. However, someone must do that tough work. Why? The youth bring life to the present church; they are also the future and the hope to carry on the heritage of the faith, hospitality, and values. For these reasons, people can participate in this precious work with conviction. This ministry is for the future and the life of the church.

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CHAPTER 1

Introduction

Problem Addressed by the Project

The Korean church has focused on adult education rather than on other levels of education. Especially, the education of youth has been ignored for years in the Korean church context. Most Korean youth have the burden of heavy studying in order to enter the university. In addition, they do not have enough time to communicate with their parents or to engage in church life because of studying. Neither do they have time to think seriously of their identity, vision and future.

On the other hand, most youth also regard church life as a boring and meaningless activity; they leave the church for other places which satisfy their interests. Moreover, every educator in Korea believes that it might be very hard for youth to find identity, vision and cooperation within their families, and churches and within the larger society. What are the reasons for this? Why does this fact happen in Korean youth? There are two major reasons. The first reason is related to the social situation. Namely, contemporary Korean society tends to emphasize materialism and individualism. Moreover, “the widening gap of rich and poor, the explosion of conflict and terrorism, the resurgence of authoritarian religions”¹ are distressing for the youth. In addition, some of their harmful surroundings -- the lack of communication, gang violence, loneliness, broken families, domestic violence and harmful mass media -- sometimes so influence

young people that it is hard for them to develop a spiritual life. As a result, there is not enough supportive social environment to encourage and guide the culture of youth. Youth are inclined to feel frustration and isolation in their surroundings.² Furthermore, “rather than having an integrated identity, many of them have a patchwork self they have made by simply adding together feelings, thoughts and beliefs copied from others.”³

Secondly, Christian education also in this social context confronts the same kinds of challenges. Woong Sup Chung points out that the Korean church lacks educational responsibility in fulfilling the church’s genuine purpose; that is, a spiritual nurture of the congregation, and sharing love with others. Therefore, it is essential for teachers to be trained educationally for the renewal of the church.⁴ Won Kyu Lee also diagnoses that the current Korean church is being replaced by new functional alternatives, such as videos, leisure activities, movies, cable television, sports, and computers.⁵

Other tensions also exist. According to Maria Harris, every church has a tension:

¹ Jack L Seymour, “Approaches to Christian Education,” in *Mapping Christian Education: Approaches to Congregational Learning*, ed. Jack L. Seymour (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1997), 16

² Joon Kwan Un, *Kidokkyo Koyuk Hyunjangron* [The field theory of Christian education] (Seoul: Korean Christian Literature Society, 1990), 13.

³ Ronald L. Koteskey, J. S. Walker, and A. W. Johnson, “Measurement of Identity from Adolescence to Adulthood: Culture, Community, Religious and Family Factors,” *Journal of Psychology and Theology* 18 (Spring 1990): 58

⁴ Woong Sup Chung, *Kyoheo Euy Kyosakyoyuk Gwajung* [The teacher training curriculum of the church] (Seoul: Korean Christian Educational Association, 1992), 11.

⁵ Won Kyu Lee, *Hankuk Kyohoe Euy Hyunsilkwa Jeunmang*, [The reality and prospect of the Korean Church] (Seoul: Bible Study Publication, 1994), 242.

the tension between the personal and the communal, between the local and the global, and between the clergy and the laity.⁶ In *Educating Congregations*, Charles R. Foster diagnoses the flaws that exist in church education. The flaws he identifies are the loss of corporate memory; the irrelevance of our teaching from the Bible; the subversion of Christian Education goals; the cultural captivity of church education; the collapse of the church's educational strategy.⁷ Furthermore, John H. Westerhoff III points out that "a challenge confronts us, for not only do we face the crisis of a bankrupt paradigm, we face a corresponding crisis in our theological foundation."⁸

Most Korean youth ministries have emphasized Sunday school and Bible study for a long time. However, the teaching style, method, content and curriculum of Sunday school and Bible study have not changed even as the situation and context of the youth have changed dramatically. The teaching style of many Korean Sunday school teachers follows a "banking concept of education."⁹ This is education by imposing knowledge on students, no matter what their situation. Its aim is to control the thinking and action of the students. As a result, it prevents them from thinking creatively. For example, in terms of

⁶ Maria Harris, *Fashion Me a People: Curriculum in the Church* (Louisville: Westminster/John Knox Press, 1989), 28-30.

⁷ Charles R. Foster, *Educating Congregations: The Future of Christian Education* (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1994), 22-35.

⁸ John H. Westerhoff III, *Will Our Children Have Faith?* (New York: Seabury Press, 1976), 26.

⁹ Paulo Freire, *Pedagogy of the Oppressed*, trans. Maya Bergman Ramos, rev. ed. (Maryknoll, N.Y.: Continuum Publishing, 1993), 58-59

Bible study method, the young people are trained by reading the Bible, listening to what the teacher says about the Bible and memorizing verses. No attempt is made to attract youth to Bible study through variety. The themes also need to be revised in the Sunday school curriculum resources. Most Sunday school textbooks focus mainly on one's relationship with God in terms of conversion and devotion toward God. Because of this, many youth are not interested in church activity and are leaving their churches.

The Korean church context has not encouraged youth to participate in church activity voluntarily. Every church has felt the necessity of developing the potential power of Youth. However, the only thing that most churches do is impose Bible stories and deliver Bible knowledge to students from the teacher. As a result, the interests and needs of youth are ignored.¹⁰

Another problem lies in the pressure and short stay of youth leaders. This problem is related to the lack of training of youth leaders in church.¹¹ Most churches usually entrust youth ministry not to full time ordained pastors but to seminarians. Although they have passion for ministry, they do not have enough experience of ministry, a sense of responsibility, spirituality and professionalism.¹² Moreover, they are not full time

¹⁰ Hee Chun Kang, "Chungsonyun Sinhak" [Theology of adolescence], *Kidokkyo Sasang* [Christian Thought] 32, no. 5 (May 1988): 94.

¹¹ So Young Kim, "Chungsonyuni Baranun Jidojasang," [The ideal leader of youth], in *Kyoheo Wha Chungsonyun Jido* [The church and youth guiding], ed. So Young Kim (Seoul: Publishing House, Presbyterian Church of Korea, 1991), 13-14.

professional ministers. Hence, they have not fully delved into their ministry through seminary study. The related problem is their short stay of youth ministry. Most Korean youth leaders work 1 or 2 years at one church. Hardly do they stay more than 3 or 4 years at one church because they usually move to the another church to start new ministry. Therefore, there is not any continuity in the education of youth. This can leave a scar on youth. As a result, the number of youth has decreased annually because they lose their interest in church life in this kind of situation.

In addition to a focus on Korea, I will describe Korean American youth briefly in order to understand the difference of the cultural situation of Korean and Korean American youth. The situation of Korean American youth is somewhat different from that of Korean youth. The main difference depends on the cultural situation of Korean American youth. In other words, they are surrounded with two cultures; that is an American and Korean Culture. In that context, many Korean youth can hardly identify who they are. Some youth adhere to Korean tradition. Others think they are American. However, most Korean American youth consider themselves “in between” American and Korean.¹³ This consideration brings youth to vacillate in their lifestyle, church life and

¹² Joon Kwan Un, “Sunkyo Yisegirul Hyanghan Hankuk Kohoe Koyuk Euy Kwaje” [The question of church education for facing the second century of mission], *Kidokkyo Sasang* [Christian Thought] 29, no. 7 (July 1985): 21-22.

¹³ Joan May Cordova, “Historical and Cultural Context,” in *Asian Pacific American Youth Ministry: Planning, Helps and Programs*, ed. David Ng (Valley Forge, Judson Press, 1988), 31-35; and Grace Sangok Kim, “Asian North American Youth: A Ministry of Self-Identity and Pastoral Care,” in *People on the Way: Asian North Americans Discovering Christ, Culture, and Community*, ed. David Ng (Valley Forge, Judson Press, 1996), 206-16.

school life. They feel like a Korean when they listen to and talk to their parents about values, morality and faith. On the other hand, they tend to act like an American—or what is associated with the dominant, white, middle class in the United States—whenever they meet and play with others in their peer group. The Korean youth, as a whole, are very accustomed to the lifestyle, attitude and thinking of Americans. In that situation, the educators need to guide them to rebuild their identity.

In sum, the problem of identity formation among Korean American youth is a little bit different from that of Korean youth. Identity formation of Korean American youth is somewhat linked to ethnic and social issues. However, both Korean and Korean American churches face challenges from society, as well as problems within the church community. Because of this, it is very hard for youth to formulate their identity easily. In this dire situation, how can educators teach the youth in their church contexts. Especially, how can educators in the Korean church lead youth to find their identity in these turbulent surroundings? The time has come for the Korean church to confront this issue for the sake of the youth.

Importance of the Problem

Why is the identity formation of youth so important in Christian education? There are a couple of reasons. First of all, it is linked to the understanding of the youth period of life. Lawrence O. Richard explains the importance of the youth period as follows.

The adolescence is a unique period because it is a time of restructuring the personality. . . . A whole new identity must be found. During this period, the young person must learn the roles he or she will play in adulthood. Sexual

identities, moral orientation, identity with the values of the larger society are all seen as taking place in this period. ¹⁴

Reverend Charles Shelton also believes that young people are “exposed to experiences that adversely impact their physical, emotional, intellectual, or spiritual growth.”¹⁵ In *Young People and Their Culture*, Ross Snyder asserts that “Youth is the time to begin doing what a person does whose life style is creating culture rather than consuming and conforming to the culture other people apart from him [her] make.”¹⁶ Stephan D. Jones also emphasizes, “The teen years are a prime time, perhaps the prime time of life, to begin to see one’s personal resources as gifts and to explore the meaning of those gifts.”¹⁷ To put it another way, adolescence is a crucial time for building identity, finding meaning in life, and preparing for the future.

Secondly, the importance of identity formation can be seen in relation to the social and psychological perspective of youth. Identity formation is affected by several elements. In *Faithcare*, Daniel O. Aleshire suggests that youth are influenced by social

¹⁴ Lawrence O. Richard, *Youth Ministry: Its Renewal in the Local Church* (Grand Rapids: Ministry Resources Library, 1985), 18.

¹⁵ Charles Shelton, “Mental Health and Conscious Functioning in At-Risk Youth,” in *The Ongoing Journey: Awakening Spiritual Life in At-Risk Youth*, ed. Robert Coles et al. (Boys Town, Neb.: Boys Town Press, 1995), 46.

¹⁶ Ross Snyder, *Young People and Their Culture* (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1969), 38.

¹⁷ Stephen D. Jones, *Faith Shaping: Youth and the Experience of Faith* (Valley Forge: Judson Press, 1987), 76.

values.¹⁸ Lester Steele also emphasizes that a series of values, moral education, sexual identity, friendship, vocational choices all encourage youth to formulate their identity.¹⁹

Young people are no longer children because they have matured physically and cognitively, but neither are they fully adults because our culture says they cannot work and must attend school. In other words, they are believed to be biologically and emotionally immature and therefore unsuited to be admitted to society as full-fledged members. They also want to have freedom from their parents and the authority that has controlled them for years. At the same time, ironically, they tend to be dependent on someone because they are uncertain and fearful of their situation. Thus, they try to join their peer group to get rid of their depression and to feel acceptance from others.²⁰ Additionally, youth are very critical of the issues that happen around them, they experience conflict and identity crisis, and they are often deep into serious pessimism. The people whom they associate with easily influence them. In this physical, psychological and social situation of youth, they need a healthy sense of identity and a feeling of self-esteem to manage the many stressful situations they encounter.

¹⁸ Daniel O. Aleshire, *Faithcare: Ministering to All God's People through the Ages of Life* (Philadelphia: Westminster Press, 1988), 127.

¹⁹ Lester L. Steele, "Identity Formation Theory and Youth Ministry," *Christian Education Journal* 9, no. 1 (1988): 92.

²⁰ Mi Ja Sa, "Insaengjuki Yironer Bichuerbon Chungsonyunki" [Adolescent stage in life cycle theory], *Kido-kyo Sasang* [Christian Thought] 32, no. 5 (May 1988): 61.

Educationally, youth can learn much in church.²¹ According to a survey that Nak Jung Choi has taken, the primary motivation for Korean youth to be involved in church life is to know the meaning of life.²² Among the many places where young people participate, the church is the best place to encourage young people to develop their identity. Therefore, educators need to give young people a place to get along with themselves, others and the world. Christian education can help this process by empowering youth through education to develop their faith, to form their identity and to dream of their vision.

Thesis

The thesis of this project is that Korean youth hunger for identity formation, and that church leaders who understand youth's experience, cultural context and quest for identity can give stronger leadership in youth ministry, both in supporting and guiding youth in creating more adequate curriculum resources.

In light of this thesis, the purpose of this project is to provide a youth identity formation curriculum for the Korean cultural context. On the basis of the gifts and needs of Korean youth in their cultural context, this curriculum offers a model for supporting youth in their search for identity, vision and faith. It is necessary for teachers and

²¹ Aleshire, 144.

²² Nak Jung Choi, *Chungsonyun Mokhoe Euy Yilonkwa Silje*[The study on practice and theory of youth ministry] (Seoul: Sung Kwang Publising, 1990), 99. Regarding questions about their motivation for involvement in church life, 40% of youths answered that they wanted to find the meaning of life. The other answers were: Christianity is the most high quality religion (30%), parent's suggestion (22%), and healing of illness (8%).

educators not only to guide the youth to find their vision for tomorrow, but also to fortify their faith journey.

Regarding this responsibility, the adult community should provide a set of consistent beliefs and a clear role for the young person to play as he or she enters adulthood. To do this, the churches must attend to the character, faith journey, gifts and agonies of the youth. Educators also need to converse with the youth so that they might discern which resources of the faith and cultural tradition will be most significant for youth. In other words, as Aleshire says, “Paying attention to the way people of faith learn and grow is an important task of ministry.”²³ Attending is an attitude toward youth that involves sincere concern and love. This involves attending to the lives of youth and their cultural context with a respectful and loving response.

Definitions of Major Terms

1. **Adolescent** The term adolescent comes from the Latin present participle of *adolescere*. It means “growing one, ” indicating sudden growth to maturity.²⁴ According to the *Random House Webster's Electronic Dictionary*, the adjective adolescent means “ growing into adulthood; youthful. . . . characteristic of adolescence; teenagers.” Today, adolescence is generally understood as the period of individual's life between ages thirteen and eighteen, basically “between early school

²³ Aleshire, 16

²⁴ Ronald L. Koteskey, “Adolescence as a Cultural Invention,” in *Handbook of Youth Ministry*, eds. Donald Ratcliff and James A. Davies (Birmingham: Religious Education Press, 1991), 42.

life and the young person's final access to specialized conscious period.”²⁵

Adolescents, thus, face important decisions for their future, and formulate an independent social being from their family members.

2. Identity formation Identity formation is the process by which people come to know who they are in the present situation, recognizing themselves as somebody.²⁶ This identity formation starts in early childhood “as the infant's ego gains a strength that permits a continuity of autonomous functioning through time and across situations.”²⁷ This identity formation takes place when people begin to discern their role in relation to God, other people, the earth and the social structure, and begin to shape a genuinely special personality. Furthermore, identity formation is also related to vocation, or the calling of people for the future.

3. Youth culture Youth culture is a unique way of life based on the behavior and lifestyle of youth. Living in a multiethnic, multiracial, multireligious society, youth try to find their own distinctive form of culture or subculture. Youth culture is the culture of adolescents who share values, beliefs, and norms for appropriate behavior.²⁸ This culture

²⁵ Erik H. Erikson, *Identity, Youth, and Crisis* (New York: W. W. Norton, 1968), 128.

²⁶ Ibid., 159-60.

²⁷ James E. Cote and Anton L. Allahar, *Generation on Hold: Coming of Age in the Late Twentieth Century* (New York: New York University Press, 1996), 80-81

²⁸ Gwen Kennedy Neville, “Culture, Youth, and Socialization,” in *Religious Education Ministry with Youth*, eds. Campbell Wyckoff and Don Richter (Birmingham: Religious Education Press, 1982), 82.

can be found in the language that young people use, and the environment in which they live. Moreover, youth culture can be seen in the beliefs, values, and actions common among adolescents since culture is a communal matter.

Work Previously Done in the Field

Although several kinds of books deal with youth ministry, the issue of identity formation needs more work.²⁹ Regarding identity formation, Erik H. Erikson is the forerunner. He deepens the understanding of adolescent identity using a psychological approach.³⁰ He explains that the identity of young people starts in early childhood.

²⁹ Concerning faith development and spirituality, see: Stephen D. Jones, *Faith Shaping: Youth and the Experience of Faith* (Valley Forge: Judson Press, 1987); Delia Touchton Halverson, *Helping Your Teen Develop Faith* (Valley Forge: Judson Press, 1988); Robert Coles et al., *The Ongoing Journey: Awakening Spiritual Life in At-Risk Youth* (Boys Town: Boys Town Press, 1995); Walt Marcum, *Living in the Light: Leading Youth to a Deeper Spirituality* (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1994). Regarding Bible teaching to youth, see: Dick Murray, *Teaching the Bible to Adults and Youth* (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1993); Iris V. Cully, *The Bible in Christian Education* (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 1995). Several books are written from an ethnic perspective: William R. Myers, *Black and White Styles of Youth Ministry* (New York: Pilgrim Press, 1991); Charles R. Foster and Grant S. Shockley, eds., *Working with Black Youth: Opportunities for Christian Ministry* (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1989); David Ng, ed., *Asian Pacific American Youth Ministry* (Valley Forge: Judson Press, 1988). Regarding the relationship to youth culture, see: Ross Snyder, *Young People and Their Culture* (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1969); Quentin J. Schultze and Roy M. Anker, *Dancing in the Dark: Youth, Popular Culture, and Electronic Media* (Grand Rapids: William B. Eerdmans Publishing, 1991). General guidebooks for youth ministry include: Glenn E. Ludwig, *Building an Effective Youth Ministry* (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1984); Michael Warden, *The Practical Youth Ministry Handbook* (Loveland: Group Publishing Co., 1993); Michael Warren, *Youth and the Future of the Church: Ministry with Youth and Young Adults* (New York: Seabury Press, 1982); Roland D. Martinson, *Effective Youth Ministry* (Minneapolis: Augsburg Publishing House, 1988); Edward A. Trimmer, *Youth Ministry Handbook* (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1994); Donald Ratcliff and James A. Davies, eds., *Handbook of Youth Ministry* (Birmingham: Religious Education Press, 1991); Campbell Wyckoff and Don Richter, *Religious Education Ministry with Youth* (Birmingham: Religious Education Press, 1982).

³⁰ Erikson describes this approach in the books *Young Man Luther*, *Identity and the Life Cycle*, and *Identity: Youth and Crisis*. See Chapters 3 and 4 of this project.

Therefore, it is necessary for them to feel their mother's love. This inter-relationship between a child and mother is an essential ingredient in identity formation. This relationship also has a large influence on a person's social relationships in adulthood. Said another way, James Fowler believes that a person's relationships with God and with parents will shape his or her later life, including one's personal qualities and interpersonal ways of relating. Thus, the quality of one's personal relationship with God and parents can enhance the identity formation of youth.³¹

More broadly, several authors believe that the relationship with the peer group, family, school, and community in which young people live also affects identity formation.³² Additionally, Steele shows the importance of spirituality in the nurturing of youth faith development. He thinks that this spiritual nurturing influences identity formation.³³

Regarding identity formation, conversion experiences and the nurture of faith have been emphasized traditionally in Korean churches. These experiences were believed to be a starting point to formulate youth identity. However, the psychological relationships of youth with other people, and with social and cultural forces have been

³¹ James W. Fowler, *Stages of Faith: The Psychology of Human Development and the Quest for Meaning* (San Francisco: Harper and Row, 1981), 161-62.

³² Craig Dykstra, "Agenda for Youth Ministry: Problems, Questions, and Strategies," in *Readings and Responses in Youth Ministry*, ed. Michael Warren (Winona, Minn: Saint Mary's Press, 1987); and Stephen D. Jones, *Faith Shaping*.

³³ Steele, 91-99.

ignored. Hence, it is about time for Korean churches leaders enlarge their understanding of identity formation. In other words, Korean church leaders should realize that youth identity can be enhanced through good psychological relationships with their parents at early age. Moreover, youth can be influenced deeply by the social and cultural settings in which they live. Conclusively, genuine identity formation involves not one element but a variety of elements.

In light of this discussion, I will demonstrate a curriculum design that can enhance the formation of the adolescent identity through exploring gifts and needs in the contemporary Korean youth cultural context.

Scope and Limitations of the Project

The adolescent identity formation curriculum presented in this project is designed for youth in Korean churches. Specifically, I will propose programs to support identity formation in the Korean youth context.

Korean youth are surrounded with several bad social environments; these include the pressure of a heavy studying, a lack of communication with parents and harmful mass media. In addition, the church also does not give youth the room to release their stress and think of their identity. The curriculum of youth is usually so boring that youth are not satisfied with this curriculum. Therefore, the youth become isolated from school, family, and church.

Educationally, it is urgent for church educators to encourage young people to think of themselves and to form their visions with conviction. Theologically, youth want to

discover who they are in relationship with God, family, community, and all living things. It is important, therefore, for youth to have opportunities to think of the meaning of life, and the relationships they have with others and with God.

This project will focus on Korean youth between 7th grade to 12th grade. Additionally, it is designed for youth programs in Korean church contexts.

Research Method.

Primarily, this project depends on library research. Generally speaking, most primary documents are written in English and Korean. The writer will translate Korean documents. In addition, specialized terms in Korea will be explained in English footnotes. Some primary documents will be critically examined and interpreted. Others will be directly or indirectly quoted in order to emphasize the content of specific sentences and phrases.

Library research will include several surveys regarding gifts and needs in Korean youth culture, understandings of youth in development theory, and identity formation theories. The actual identity formation program will be grounded in two books: *Theory and Design of Christian Education Curriculum* by Campell Wyckoff, and *Education for Continuity and Change* by Mary Elizabeth Moore. I will present two major themes from these books--curriculum theory and traditioning theory-- as well as develop educational programs based on these theories. Korean sources are also used whenever they are available. The Bible that I use will be the New International Version unless otherwise noted.

Chapter Outlines

This project is divided into seven chapters. After this first introductory chapter, the second chapter is a review of the cultural context of Korean youth. This chapter will describe the gifts of the cultural context of Korean youth; especially focusing on filial piety (*Hyo*) and on sharing with others. In addition, I will reveal some needs in Korean culture that prevent youth from formulating their identity; namely, the harmful mass media, the burden of study, and the lack of communication. This chapter is focused particularly on how to respond educationally to the gifts and needs of Korean youth in their cultural context.

The third chapter will deal with several aspects of youth experience. I will present cognitive understandings of youth based on Jean Piaget, Lawrence Kohlberg, Robert Goldman and James Fowler. Then, I will present Erik Erikson's understanding of the youth using psychosocial approach.

The fourth chapter offers an identity formation theory as a way to respond to Korean youth in their cultural context. This chapter includes a definition of identity. Then, an identity formation theory of youth is developed drawing upon several approaches--psychological, social, cultural, spiritual, and biological.

The fifth chapter offers a theory of identity formation curriculum, informed by the curriculum theory of Campbell Wyckoff.³⁴ Specifically, I adopt his idea of curriculum, focusing on the scope (what), the context (where), the process (how), the participant

(who) and an overall vision for Christian education. In addition, I present the “continuity and change” theory of Elizabeth Moore as it is related to curriculum and resources. I conclude with a unique construction of five theological identity formation themes based on the theory of Campbell Wyckoff and Mary Elizabeth Moore.

The sixth chapter is a presentation of the practical curriculum resource. This includes basic suggestions regarding place, time schedules and other practical guidelines. Then, I will include the evaluation of this curriculum. This evaluation is based on the survey results that I had taken during Vacation Bible Study in Korea for four years from 1991 and 1994.

Finally, in chapter 7, I draw conclusions about youth ministry in the Korean cultural context. I relate these conclusions to the themes of *basileia and ecclesia* in Joon Kwan Un’s work.³⁵ I conclude with a vision of youth ministry which points toward the reign of God.

³⁴ Campbell Wyckoff, “Understanding Your Church Curriculum,” *Princeton Seminary Bulletin* 63, no. 1 (July 1970): 77-84.

³⁵ The new theme of Kingdom of God includes the reign of God, historical praxis and eschatological community.

CHAPTER 2

The Critique of the Korean Youth Cultural Context

Overview

Youth culture is the culture created by youth voluntarily. Youth culture represents the lifestyle of youth.¹ Hence, it is necessary for educators to identify the cultural context of youth, that is, the lifestyle and environment of youth.

Knowing the cultural context, educators are able not only to understand youth, but also to teach them more effectively. Lawrence O. Richards writes, “ It is a vital in planning for ministry with youth that we understand the styles in which youth tend to think and feel.... It is particularly important when we examine the values of youth that we understand the cultural forces that affect them.”² Stephen D. Jones also thinks that educators can work with young people within youth culture. Furthermore, youth are shapers of their culture, not consumers.³ Thus, the actions of youth have influence on youth culture, ethnic culture, national culture, and the larger society. For these reasons, educators should help young people not only to formulate their own cultures but also to think of alternatives for reshaping destructive things in the larger

¹ Kang, “ Youth Theology,” 94.

² Richards, *Youth Ministry: Its Renewal in the Local Church*, 14.

³ Jones, 90

society.⁴ In sum, the educator's responsibilities are identifying youth culture, dealing with the problems that youth confront in the larger contemporary culture, and empowering youth to shape the culture in which they live as their own.

On the basis of this belief, I would like to present the Korean cultural context of youth. This is the cultural setting that youth have learned and confronted since childhood; It can be described in terms of dominant features that are characteristic of Korean and Korean-American People. Especially, this section reveals two gifts and three needs of the Korean cultural context which influence the formation of identity for youth.

The Gifts of the Korean Youth Cultural Context

This part shows two gifts that affect the identity formation of youth; that is, filial piety and sharing with neighbors. These are both dominant features of Korean and Korean American contexts. Filial piety-- reverence toward their parents and elders-- is the most important gift that youth should keep in mind. The gift of sharing with neighbors is the mutual recognizing of neighbors' joy and sorrow.

Filial Piety (*Hyo*)

Korean society has been influenced by China's culture from generation to generation.⁵

⁴ Ibid

⁵ The exact date that Confucianism entered Korea is not known. However, all three early Kingdoms have left records that indicate an early existence of Confucian influence. For example, there was a Confucian university operating in the northernmost Kingdom of Koguryo during the fourth century and The Paekche Kingdom

Therefore, the culture of Korea is similar to that of China. Most of all, Confucianism has influenced Korean culture. As a result, the Korean family teaches customs, culture and rules to their children at an early age. The young generation also shows respect toward the old generation in the Confucian way.⁶

Confucius taught that “society was made up of five relationships, those between ruler and subjects, husband and wife, father and son, elder brother and younger brother and between friends.”⁷ The chief gift among them is filial piety, a combination of loyalty and reverence. Every child has in his or her own mind to respect his or her parents, even after the death of the parents, because children believe that to be born and to be raised by parents is a great grace for them. Moreover, the children try to fulfill the demands of their parents because they already know that their parents have done a great deal of hard work for them.⁸ Children usually regard these efforts as a grace for them, so they respect their parents in

established similar universities about the same period. The southernmost kingdom of Shilla was the last to import this foreign influence in 503.

⁶ Yong Soo Hyun, *Culture and Religious Education: Direction for the Religious Education of Korean-American 2nd Generation* (Los Angeles: Korean-American Christian Education Institute, 1993), 76. Hyun describes several Korean values, customs and cultures. He suggests the possibility of religious education which is based on traditional Korean cultural values. Much of what he says is relevant both to Korean and Korean American communities-He gives particular attention to the relationships across genders and family lines between 1st generation and 2nd generation of Korean American.

⁷ Korean Overseas Information Service, *Focus On Korea: Korean Arts and Culture* (Seoul: Seoul International Publishing House, 1986), 79.

⁸ Ibid.

gratitude.

Furthermore, they also try to repay the grace of their parents because they have experienced the love that their parents show.⁹ For example, adult children buy medicine and nutritious food for their parents' health; they give their parents a chance to go on trips for pleasure; they usually give their parents some allowance every month. The parents teach them what morality means, how to act in front of the public and how to live for the future. As a result, parents can be a role model for their children to feel God's character and presence.¹⁰ This is an idea echoed by Majorie Thomson in her book *Family*, which is focused on families in general and not on Korean families in particular. Korean children will usually obey their parent's wishes and consider their parents as role models to get glimpses of the virtues that their parents present. Therefore, they are always very careful not to breach etiquette or perform any act that would bring disrespect upon their parents.

The children usually say hello to their parents every day in person or by telephone, as well as celebrate the birthday of their parents every year. Some children take care of their parents after the children are married. In other words, they live together with their parents to serve their parents. Furthermore, they sometimes follow their parents' wish even if they do

⁹ Hyun, 80-82.

¹⁰ Marjorie Thompson, *Family: The Forming Center* (Nashville: Upper Room Press, 1989), 22.

not want to accept it; they regard this as the way of filial piety.¹¹

In sum, filial piety is an essential gift of Korean youth culture inherited from generation to generation. It leads youth to respect the older generation as a virtue, as well as to get to know the meaning of good manners. Additionally, This gift encourages adolescents to keep in mind the importance of sustaining healthy family, community and society.

Sharing with Neighbor

According to a Korean proverb, " Whereas the joy increases whenever it is shared with others, the sorrow decreases whenever it is shared others." Likewise, sharing is another gift of the Korean youth cultural context. Most adolescents have known the importance of sharing with others through the teaching of their parents and through the social cultural atmosphere. Adolescents are raised to notice this gift. For example, whenever family members, relatives and friends have happiness, like a wedding ceremony or a promotion, adolescents see that the people around them enter joyfully into this happiness by sharing food and presents.

For instance, if a family's children enter the university, neighbors and relatives always offer the parents and their children their congratulations. Sometimes, the parents have a party to share their joy with the neighbors and relatives. Moreover, if a family has a special event such as a baby's first year birthday party or a parent's sixtieth birthday party, the family

¹¹ Hyun, 87-88

invites relatives, friends and neighbors in order to share their joy with others.¹²

Those who are invited celebrate and give presents and money to the family in order to share their joy. Participating in these celebrations teaches youth the importance of recognizing and sharing joy with others.

On the other hand, whenever there are difficulties, Koreans share their trouble with each other also. For example, If a family has a difficulty such as death, illness, or some other unfortunate thing, the relatives, friends, and neighbors give some condolence to the family. When the father of one of my friends passed away five years ago because of a car accident, I stayed all night long with my friend to console his mind. Usually, at the time of death, the custom for Korean people is to stay with the bereaved family for one or two days. Similarly, when a student has an incurable disease like cancer, the other students of his or her school collect money to help the student recover from the disease. Moreover, teachers and the parents of other students participate in this movement in order to share the sorrow.

In sum, sharing with others is also one of the essential gifts passed on to Korean youth. Adolescents are deeply involved in this gift, which surrounds them in daily life. Most adolescents have already learned that the sharing of joy and sorrow with their family, friends and neighbors is an important practice to follow.

12. In Korea, the first year birthday of a baby and the sixtieth year birthday of a parent are regarded as important family celebrations. The first year birthday party is held to celebrate the health and good fortune of baby. On the other hand, the sixtieth year birthday party wishes for longevity of parents.

The Needs of the Korean Youth Cultural Context

Although youth can develop their identity through interpersonal relationships, community activities and spiritual programs, a lot of youth are hampered by their cultural context. In studying Korean youth ministry, I discovered some specific needs of the Korean youth culture. One of the needs is a general problem for all youth, the mass media; others concern schoolwork and the lack of communication between parents and children, which are typical problems of Korean youth.

The Harmful Effect of the Mass Media

The mass media is an important aspect of young people's lives. James E. Cote and Anton L. Allahar maintain:

In postmodernity, the media plays a primary role as mediator for each of these social organizations. Adolescents' very perceptions of, and experiences within, each are shaped to a greater or lesser extent by experiences with information technology such as television, telephone, FM radio, video, and computer ... postmodern adolescent life in Greelong, Australia, is increasingly linked to life in Los Angeles, Tokyo and Berlin.¹³

Since 1970, the influence of mass media on Korean Society has been profound. Nowadays, we have newspapers, magazines, T.V, films, plays, music, literature, advertisements, and cartoons. Of these newspapers, magazines and television seem to have the

¹³ Cote and Allahar, *Generation on Hold*, 22.

greatest influence on people.¹⁴

Youth are sensitive to such media. Through it, they gain information, perspectives and imagination that they could not acquire by themselves. However, the problem is that they are easily influenced. They accept ideas propagated by the media without reflection.¹⁵ They do not question whether such ideas are helpful for them or not. The message of the media is often materialistic, sensual and consumeristic. Such harmful influences play a great role in forming a wrong identity.

Yong Gil Mang elaborates on the effects of the mass media on youth.¹⁶ First of all, the media contributes to a passive attitude in youth. Youth have their needs met in a superficial way and are induced to follow the dictates of the media. Second, it provides a place to escape from reality. While reading magazines or watching TV, youth become isolated from society. More and more they are inclined to live in imagery world of the media rather than real world. Next, the media often have a negative effect on attitudes toward sex, violence and pleasure. The curiosity of young people is aroused and they often give up their distinctive identities and sacrifice their character looking for some new thrill. Young people in Korea, additionally, when exposed to western media, become dissatisfied with their own culture and consider

¹⁴ Yong Gil Mang, "Hankuk Euy Daejung Maeche Wha Chungsonyun Munhwa," [Massmedia of Korea and youth culture], *Gyohoe Koyuk* [Church Education/ 202, (1993): 29.

¹⁵ Ibid., 30.

¹⁶ Ibid., 30-32.

western culture better than theirs. Finally, youth are often the victims of the consumerism of the mass media. Youth are led to regard money as the most important sign of success. Such thinking has a negative effect on the family system.

In sum, while mass media is indispensable to the lives of young people, giving them an opportunity to learn useful ideas, it also takes advantage of youth through its emphasis on consumerism, materialism, sex, violence and isolation from reality.

Too Much Emphasis on Studying.

A revision of the meaning of education is needed in the Korean cultural context. After entering kindergarten, the parents really want their children to take extracurricular courses, such as playing the piano, drawing, *Taekwando* (Korean martial art) or English conversation. They express their wishes no matter what the children's wish. Parents wish for their children to be good professionals because they themselves did not have time to get a good education. The Korean War and civil war prevented many parents from receiving a good education. Hence, they do not want their children to receive a poor education like themselves. Their only wishes toward their children are for their well being, peace and success.¹⁷ This attitude of the parents is a little bit egoistic and individualistic because this regards their children's success as the most important virtue. This attitude is well related to Shamanized Korean Christianity.

¹⁷ David Kwang-sun Suh, "Liberating Spirituality in the Korean Minjung Tradition: Shamanism and Minjung Liberation," in *Asian Christian Spirituality: Reclaiming Traditions*, eds. Virginia Fabella et al. (Maryknoll: Orbis Books, 1992), 32

This Christianity emphasizes the health, wealth, success and blessings of family members.¹⁸

Because of the parents' wishes, most Korean students study hard from an early age. Therefore, they learn a lot of information and knowledge. On the other hand, they do not have time to think of themselves sincerely because so much energy is devoted to studying. Moreover, they usually do not know the true reason for studying.¹⁹ The main reason to study for youth is to enter the university and to get a good job. Korean youth spend most of their time in school or studying.

According to a survey taken by one of the Korean broadcasting companies, although they are accustomed to attending school, most youth do not like to go because there is too much emphasis on studying (60.6%), and the classes are too difficult to understand (29.6%).²⁰ Moreover, Korean youth are burdened with concerns about entering the university (41%) and studying (55.2%). Because of these worries, youth are prone to headaches (32.3%) and depression (33.5%), they often want to scream (38.5%), or they are listless(36.4%).²¹ Most students also attend extracurricular classes (51.5%), work on self-study materials (26.3%) and

¹⁸ Ibid., 32-33.

¹⁹ Choi, *Study on the Practice and Theory of Youth Ministry*, 66.

²⁰ MBC (Munhwa Broadcasting Company) Radio Production, *Chungsoonyun Baekser 1991* [Youth report of 1991]/(Seoul: MBC Radio Department, 1991), 132-33. .

²¹ Ibid., 28-29.

take lessons from private tutors (12.3%). Most really want to enter the university (71.3%). During their free time, they usually watch television and read magazines (52.9%), or just relax at home (23.2%). Others activities include meeting friends (19.8%), studying (18%), reading books (16%), religious life (15.9%), and listening to music (14.8%).²²

Because of the burden of studying, 18% of the students experience medical treatment for mental problems.²³ The percentage of senior high students in such treatment is higher than that of junior highs. Among them, the 12th grade students have the highest rate; 25.7 % of 12th graders have received medical treatment for mental problems.²⁴ In addition, 85% of the households in Korea spend money for private education. The amount of money for private education is about 13 billion dollars, which is 2.8% of the GDP of Korea.²⁵

Most Korean students study hard from an early age because of their parents' wishes.²⁶ Therefore, they tend to be knowledgeable in a number of subject areas. However, the notion of

²² Ibid., 42.

²³ Sang Yeol Lee "Ko Sam Haksaeng 25 percent Chungsinkwa Chiryo Bateunjuk lita [25% of 12th students experienced medical treatment for mental problems], *Korea Central Daily* (Seoul), 19 May 1997, 26.

²⁴ Ibid., 26. Regarding the experience of medical treatment for mental problems, the percentage of the 7th grade students is 11.9%, the 8th is 17.4%, the 9th is 17.8%, the 10th is 19.2%, the 11th is 16.0%, and the 12th is 25.7%.

²⁵ Ibid. The meaning of private education is an extra studying for enhancing needing study, for example, self-study material, private tutoring, attending a private educational institute, and a supplementary lesson in school.

²⁶ Ibid. The percentage of private education for preschool and kindergarten students is 11.6%(1.7 billion dollars).

studying has influenced the youth badly. First of all, this thinking prevents students from thinking creatively about their future. They do not have time to think about themselves sincerely because so much energy is devoted to studying. The competition with each other for good grades also brings egotism at an early age. The students then become inclined to evaluate people according to their degree or diploma.

To put it another way, this overemphasis on studying has a negative effect on identity formation. In this situation, it is urgent to shift the emphasis on education for material success and achievement for the future. Moreover, education needs to be changed so that youth can recognize the sense of value in the present.

Lack of Communication.

We observed earlier that filial piety is a good part of the Korean culture; however, some problems are also rooted in this cultural practice. What is most needed is sincere communication between parents and their children. Koreans regard obedience as a good attitude of children toward their parents. This phenomenon is expressed a formal pattern of cultural transmission, according to the categories of Edward T. Hall, in *The Silent Language*.²⁷ The communication of this value of obedience is very direct, so the parents

²⁷ Edward T. Hall, *The Silent Language* (Garden City, N.Y.: Doubleday, Anchor, 1973), 64-65. Hall explains three patterns of cultural transmission, that is, formal, informal and technical. Formal patterns of cultural transmission are direct ways of communicating between parents and children. This pattern is used to declare something right or wrong. Informal patterns of cultural transmission are communicated through informal interaction between peoples and through modeling. Technical patterns of cultural transmission are usually given in an explanatory form such as "Abortion is wrong/right because. . ."

always take the initiative in communication. In other words, they usually say to their children something like this; “You should study hard to be a good person,” or “You do not skip Sunday school.” Thus, the relationship between the parents and children is like a subject to an object. The parents tend to present their children with morals, wishes and rules like a king or queen, and the children usually accept and follow these sayings like a servant, in spite of disagreement.²⁸

In the Korean context, children usually consider that disobedience is not good behavior. However, as children grow, they have doubts about the faith, values, identity and dreams that their parents have given them. They tend to come into conflict with their parents because of their different viewpoints. Whereas parents want their children to follow their wishes unquestionably, the children want to know the reason why before they obey. Both sides are frustrated. This situation results from a lack of communication. Parents usually take the initiative to communicate. They often expect that what they say is law for the family. The children usually obey without saying anything.²⁹ As a result, the parents seldom hear their children’s real wishes, and children can easily get misunderstandings, experience displeasure, or develop resentment toward their parents.

The more the Korean economy is industrialized the more both parents work outside the

²⁸ Hyun, 75.

²⁹ Choi, 182-83

home for their living. This phenomenon also has an affect on family relationships.

Because both parents work every day, they do not have enough time to communicate with their children. As a result, some parents give money to their children to offset not sharing time with them. However, this is not a solution. The children, especially youth, do not only want money. They really want a caring and honest relationship with their parents. In the Korean context, a family relationship plays a great role in the formation of young people's identity. Therefore, good communication between parents and their children is imperative. Through this communication, children can release their resentment and develop healthy identities. Thus, it is necessary for both parents and children to try to understand each other through sincere communication and listening.

How Youth Ministry could Engage in

Critique of the Korean Youth Cultural Context

Robert L. Browning and Roy A. Reed point out that during the adolescent period it is essential for young people to feel safe. Therefore, it is necessary for adolescents to find the balance between self-identity, independence and interpersonal relationships.³⁰ However, Korean youth usually do not feel safe, nor do they have enough time to find this balance because of studying.

As described earlier, a number of parents in Korea want their children to be

³⁰ Robert L. Browning and Roy A. Reed, *Models of Confirmation and Baptismal Affirmation: Liturgical and Educational Issues and Designs* (Birmingham: Religious Education Press, 1995), 147.

professionals or to live happily without hardships or difficulties. They think that it is very essential for their children to study hard to achieve this goal. Therefore, the parents of senior high school students urge their children to study all day long to enter the university because they think that to enter the university is the first step to becoming a professional. These parents believe that their children are guaranteed success only if their children enter the university.

This phenomenon leads to some side effects for youth. Some students try to study only to follow their parents' wishes, without having any internal purposes. Thus, they always worry about their grades, especially if their grades are low. In fact, some students have the experience of being punished by their parents or quarreling with their parents because of poor grades. As a result, a great number of adolescents have an impulse to run away from their homes.³¹

This phenomenon affects also their church life. Every church has a small number of senior high students. When they are in 12th grade, they quit their church life to prepare for college. Even if the parents are Christian, they sometimes do not allow their children to go to church during this grade. Instead of going to church on Sunday, the adolescents usually go to a private institute or go to the school library to make up their studying.

Parental Pressure also brings some life- threatening side effects in the Korean context.

³¹ Choi, 90. According to the survey by Choi, 301 adolescents among 520 (more than 57%) have this impulse to leave their home.

According to one survey, 8 of 10 Korean youth think of committing suicide because they can not cope with the over expectation of their parents.³²

Given this unstable situation of adolescents, how does youth ministry respond to the critical Korean youth cultural needs? First of all, youth ministry must give the youth a chance to look into themselves. According to Sara Little, "Teaching may be employed as an instrument for use by the church in helping persons find meaning in a chaotic world."³³ Most teens in Korea receive imposed wishes from their parents. The youth do not have enough time to think of the meaning of life, study and faith. Hence, youth ministry has to lead young people to find meaning by exposing and involving them honestly and freely in the church faith community. From this participation, they not only release their stress, but they also get time to think of themselves. Youth ministry ought to be a place, then, for students to seek themselves.

Developing mutual understanding between parents and students is also an important goal for youth Ministry. This leads older and younger people to know each other. The older people can become more able to appreciate youth and young adults, and the younger people can also better understand adults and the elderly.³⁴ Ultimately, both ages need to work

³² Ibid., 105-06.

³³ Sara Little, *To Set One's Heart: Belief and Teaching in the Church* (Atlanta: John Knox Press, 1983), 5.

³⁴ James W. White, *Intergenerational Religious Education: Models, Theory, and Prescription for Interage Life and Learning in the Faith Community* (Birmingham: Religious Education Press, 1988),

together on the basis of mutual understanding. Although there is a lack of communication between parents and their children, youth ministry can make an effort to connect this broken relationship.

For example, a Sunday school teacher can send a letter to the parents of their children and youth once a month. This letter can include a description of the students' church life, the teacher's wishes for the parents, and suggestions for building the family relationships. In addition, the Sunday school can invite parents to the church. In that case, a church can prepare programs dealing with the students' agony and the wishes of their parents. From this experience, they can come to know and understand each other better.

Finally, the educator or youth minister should encourage students to look forward and to see positively their present surroundings and their future. Although the students already know of their painful situation, they have the possibility of dedicating themselves to their future through taking responsibility for their present roles in school, church, home and society. They have the possibility of building on what is good and working to change what is destructive. The situation sometimes nags at them and seems like a hell because of over expectation. However, the educator can open the door of the church to hear the voice of the young person and to wrestle with his or her agony. The purpose is to help youth answer the question, "Why I

do suffer these agonies in this weird society.”³⁵ Youth only want a place of acceptance and people who listen and understand. Although they do not always find answers, they are satisfied with themselves if somebody listens carefully to their agony. Ideally, this is a mutual dialogue, but it can also occur when no word is spoken. This dialogue, which “is an attitude appropriate for all teaching,” brings the youth to understand their surroundings as well as to prepare for their futures.³⁶

In conclusion, youth ministry has the potential power to engage in the difficulties of youth, and to guide them in preparing for their future.

³⁵ Little, 34.

³⁶ Ibid., 89.

CHAPTER 3

The Understanding of Adolescence in the Developmental Theory

G. Stanley Hall presented two volumes that signified the beginning of a new scientific field—adolescent psychology. Hall defined adolescence as a period of “storm and stress,” a description that is still used and still applicable. According to Hall, “Adolescence begins at puberty.... and ends when full adult status has been attained.”¹ Namely, adolescence was begun by physiological change and was ended by psychological change.² Additionally, Dorothy Rogers describes adolescence as “a process rather than a period, a process of achieving the attitudes and beliefs needed for effective participation in society.”³

Adolescence is the time in one's entire life journey when potentiality is most abundant. Therefore, it is necessary for educators to get a full sense of the development theory of adolescence. In this chapter, I will present several developmental theories. These theories mainly divide into two categories: the cognitive understanding of development and the emotive (psychological) understanding of development. The cognitive understanding of development includes the cognitive development theory of Jean Piaget, the moral development theory of Lawrence Kohlberg, the religious development theory of Ronald Goldman, and the faith

¹ Guy J. Manaster, *Adolescent Development and the Life Task* (Boston: Allyn and Bacon, 1977), 3

² Ibid.

³ Dorothy Rogers, *The Psychology of Adolescence* (New York: Appleton-Century-Crofts, 1962), 9.

development theory of James Fowler. The emotive understanding of development is drawn here from the psychosocial developmental theory of Erik Erikson.

The Cognitive Understanding of Adolescent Development

Jean Piaget's Cognitive Development of Adolescent

Jean Piaget's theory is the prototype in a cognitive theory. Piaget measures intellectual development, and he maintains that people pass through various stages of development in the way that they structure their experience.⁴ On the basis of this assumption, he divides the cognitive stages into 4 structures. The first stage (Ages 0-2) is called sensorimotor stage. In this stage, the baby responds instinctively to control the body and to use the senses in their multiple possible combinations. The second stage (Ages 3-6) is the pre-operational stage. In this stage, the child has difficulty in distinguishing between inward experience and outer reality. The next stage (Ages 7-11) is called the concrete operations stage in which children think in terms of concrete representations of the world. The transition of morality from unilateral to mutual respect happens in this stage. The last stage (Ages 12-adult) is the formal operations stage. This stage initiates hypothetical and abstract thinking.⁵

Piaget describes the adolescent stage as a time when most youth are making the transition

⁴ Daniel A. Helminiak, *Spiritual Development: An Interdisciplinary Study* (Chicago: Loyola University Press, 1987), 51.

⁵ Donald E. Miller, "The Developmental Approach to Christian Education," in *Contemporary Approaches to Christian Education*, eds. Jack L. Seymour and Donald E. Miller (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1982), 78-79

to abstract, reflective thought. It is transition from logical inference as a set of concrete operations to logical inference as a set of formal operations. This means that "the adolescent can classify classification, that he [she] can combine combinations, that he [she] can relate relationship. . . . Furthermore, he [she] can think about thought, and create thought systems or 'hypothetico-deductive' theories.' This involves the awareness of the logically possible observation."⁶

The main characteristic of formal operations is that thought becomes oriented toward possibility and separated from reality. Thought becomes abstract in that it can proceed in the absence of the data of reality.⁷

The second characteristic of formal operation in adolescence is the use of the hypothetico-deductive method. The formal operational person can proceed in the absence of any empirical data, can consider hypothesis that may occur or might be feasible, and can consider what would follow if they were true.⁸

The third characteristic is that formal operations are second order operations because they

⁶ Lawrence Kohlberg and Carol Gilligan, "Adolescent as a Philosopher: The Discovery of the Self in a Postconventional World," *Journal of the American Academy of Arts and Sciences* 100, no.4 (1971): 1061.

⁷ Barbel Inhelder and Jean Piaget, *The Growth of Logical Thinking from Childhood to Adolescence: An Essay on the Construction of Formal Operational Structures*, eds Anne Parson and Stanley Milgram (New York: Basic Books, 1958), 2

⁸ Herbert Ginsburg and Sylvia Opper, *Piaget's Theory of Intellectual Development: An Introduction* (Englewood Cliffs, N. J.: Prentice Hall, 1969), 203.

are operations based on the results of first-order operations, concrete operations. The person with formal operations has the “ability verbally to manipulate relationships between ideas (‘second-order relations’) in the absence of recently prior or concurrently available concrete-empirical props.”⁹

To put it another way, the major characteristics of formal operations encompasses three things. Those are: (1) emphasized on reality subordinate to possibility, (2) the hypothetico-deductive method is widely used, and (3) propositional logic is based on second-order operations.

Lawrence Kohlberg's Moral Development of Adolescence

Lawrence Kohlberg maintained that moral judgment derives from human interaction. His theory presumes that the heart of morality lies in knowing what is required of one. Having studied moral reasoning in people at different age, he found developmental patterns and he labeled the levels and stage as follows:

- Level I Premoral(Preconventional)
 - Stage 1 (ages 3-6) Punishment and obedience orientation
 - Stage 2 (ages 6-10) Naïve Instrumental Hedonism
- Level II Morality of Conventional Role Conformity(Conventional)
 - Stage 3(ages 10-15) Good boy Morality of maintaining good relations, approval of others
 - Stage 4(ages 15-20) Authority Maintaining Morality (Law and Order)
- Level III Morality of Self-Accepted Moral Principles(Post Conventional)

⁹ Manaster, 36-37

Stage 5(ages 20 and up) Morality of contrast, of individual rights,
and of democratically accepted law(Social Contract)
Stage 6 Morality of Individual Principles of Conscience (Universal
moral principles)¹⁰

These stage patterns reveal developmental shifts in the locus of authority and the patterns of moral decision making.

Among these stages, stage 4 shows orientation toward authority, fixed rules, and maintenance of the social order. Moreover, right behavior consists of doing one's duty, showing respect for authority, and maintaining the given social order for its own sake.¹¹

Kohlberg thinks that adolescents regress in moral stage during the course of transitions to new stages, and that moral development is pretty well perceived in adolescence. However, he also maintains that moral development goes on into adulthood, and that, although adolescents may develop an awareness of principled moral reasoning, an actual commitment to its ethical employment does not develop until adulthood.¹²

Moreover, Kohlberg thinks that the adolescents who come to this point of transition must feel conflict, but the conflict and inconsistency may not be actually apparent to the adolescent. Thus, he point outs that although the conflict can be quite surprising, the adolescent will attempt

¹⁰ Lawrence Kohlberg " Stage of Development as a Basis for Education," in *Moral Development, Moral Education, and Kohlberg: Basic Issues in Philosophy, Psychology, Religion, and Education*, ed. Brenda Munsey (Birmingham : Religious Education Press, 1980), 91-93.

¹¹ Miller, " Developmental Approach to Christian Education," 82.

¹² Lawrence Kohlberg, " Continuities and Discontinuities in Childhood and Adult Moral Development Revisited," in *Collected Papers on Moral Development and Moral Education* [Cambridge: Mass, 1973], 15-41.

to make it seem coherent and organized in order to maintain equilibrium. However, the adolescent may experience difficulty in making it seem so.¹³

Kohlberg describes two stages of moral development that are common for adolescents. The second level in moral development is conventional, and it includes the two stages (3 and 4), that often become dominant in adolescence. In stage 3, the adolescent takes into account the intentions, expectations and rules of his or her family, group, or nation, seeking not to hurt others. The adolescent is concerned with conforming to his or her social order, maintaining, supporting and justifying this order.

Stage 4 can also be evident in adolescence. This stage is characterized by a major thrust toward autonomous moral principles, or doing one's duty. These moral principles have validity and application apart from the authority of groups or persons who hold them, and apart from his or her identification with those persons and groups.¹⁴

In summary, Kohlberg understands adolescence as the period in which youth usually try to identify right behavior and to follow duty in order to maintain the rule of their society.

Robert Goldman's Religious Development of Adolescence

Robert Goldman emphasizes "readiness for religion." He believes that people of each stage understand the same Bible story differently. Goldman characterizes each stage according to

¹³ Manaster, 66.

¹⁴ Kohlberg and Gilligan, 1066-67.

one's understanding of religion. The first stage (ages 5- 7) is called " pre-religious thought." The children of this stage give distorted answers to religious questions. The second stage (ages 7-11) is "sub-religious thought." Although the children give answers related to causality, their answers usually miss the meaning of the biblical text. The next stage (ages 11-13) is "beginning personal religious thought." The children show genuine understanding of religion. The last stage (ages 13 plus) is established "personal religious thought." The children firmly understand and interpret the content of the Bible.¹⁵

Goldman believes that twelve and thirteen years old do some anthropomorphic thinking. However, most of the early adolescents regard God as an invisible Spirit. Moreover, they understand the communication between God and human as internal and subjective. They also have difficulty in separating the natural and supernatural world. This conflict brings them to doubt about miracles.¹⁶

Goldman also suggests that adolescents from 13 to 17 show an altruistic view of prayer. Because they can feel God's presence, they are able to offer altruistic prayer. Furthermore, they can see prayer's result in their experience of peace, calm, joy, and faith in God's power.¹⁷

¹⁵ Donald E. Miller, *Story and Context: An Introduction to Christian Education* (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1987), 190-91, Citing Robert Goldman, *Religious Thinking from Childhood to Adolescence* (New York: Seabery Press, 1968), 119-2

¹⁶ Robert Goldman, *Religious Thinking from Childhood to Adolescence* (London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1964), 239-41.

¹⁷ Ibid. 179-8

In sum, Goldman, especially presents the central cognitive view of religion in adolescence. He believes that the adolescent is able to think in terms of religious concepts about God. The adolescent is at a time of deciding whether to accept or reject God as an unseen Sprit.¹⁸

James Fowler's Faith Development of Adolescence

James Fowler defines faith as a person's attitude toward the ultimate environment.¹⁹ He also describes the stages of faith as a series of stagelike "styles" in which persons participate in the activity of meaning-making and in communities of shared meaning and value. A stage is "a particular way or organizing, composing, or of giving form to the contents of beliefs or values. Stage descriptions focus on the how of faith rather than on the what or the content of faith."²⁰

He divides faith development stage into 6 categories:

- Stage 1. Intuitive-Projective Faith (ages 3 to 7)
- Stage 2. Mythic-Literal Faith (Ages 7-11)
- Stage 3. Synthetic-Conventional Faith (Ages 12-18)
- Stage 4. Individuative-Reflective Faith (Ages 18-30)
- Stage 5. Paradoxical- Consolidative Faith (Age 30-40)

¹⁸ Miller, "Developmental Approach to Christian Education," 79-80.

¹⁹ Fowler, *Stage of Faith*, 33.

²⁰ James Fowler, "Moral Stage and the Development of Faith," in *Moral Development, Moral Education, and Kohlberg: Basic Issues in Philosophy, Psychology, Religion, and Education*, ed. Brenda Munsey (Birmingham: Religious Education Press, 1980), 141-43.

Stage 6. Universalizing Faith (Ages 40 and up) ²¹

These stages include cognitive elements, as well as psychosocial ones, and Fowler draws explicitly on Kohlberg, Piaget and Erikson.

Fowler recognizes that adolescent faith development is often expressed in the style of stage 3 though adolescents can be at other stages as well. The adolescent experience of the world extends beyond the family. A number of spheres demand attention: family, school or work, peers, street society and media, and perhaps religion. Eventually, youth begin to see themselves in relationship with others whom they encounter. Faith in stage 3 is a conformist faith. It is tuned to the expectations of significant others. Yet it can provide a coherent orientation in the midst of a complex and diverse range of involvements. The adolescent can approach a complex world with a coherent and satisfactorily reasonable stance. Consequently, faith in stage 3 is able to synthesize values and information; it provides a basis for identity and outlook.²²

To put it another way, in stage 3 (Synthetic-Conventional Faith), adolescents extend their relationships toward others. They find their own faith through interpersonal relationships. A number of spheres— family, school, work, peers, and friends—help youth hold their faith meaningfully, providing a basis for identity and outlook. Moreover, with a wide range of social involvements, the faith of the adolescent helps to provide "meaningful synthesis" of the

²¹ Fowler, *Stage of Faith*, 122-213.

²² Ibid, 151-54.

complexities which they encounter.²³

Psychosocial Understanding of Adolescence:

Erik H. Erikson's Psychosocial Development of Adolescence

The primary example of psychosocial development is Erik H. Erikson. He suggests that a healthy personality is grounded in ego strength and in psychosocial attitude. These two categories are very essential in emotional development according to Erikson.²⁴

Erikson presents his emotional development stage like this;

Stage One (Age 0-1): Trust versus Mistrust

Stage Two (Ages 2-3): Autonomy versus Shame and Doubt

Stage Three (Ages 3-6): Initiative versus Guilt

Stage Four (Ages 6-11): Industry versus Inferiority

Stage Five (Ages 12-18): Identity versus Identity Confusion

Stage Six (Ages 19-30): Intimacy versus Isolation

Stage Seven (Ages 30-65): Generativity versus Stagnation

Stage Eight(Ages 66 and up): Integrity versus Despair²⁵

Erikson's stages are like segments in the life histories of individuals; they define the central concerns of persons in a developmental period. Erikson describes adolescence as a second latency period that he sees as a "psychological moratorium." Although the adolescent period has been illustrated in several ways, "psychological moratorium" is particularly

²³ Ibid, 162-64.

²⁴ Erik H. Erikson, *Identity and the Life Cycle*, Psychological Issues, vol. 1, no.1 (New York: International Universities Press, 1959), 40-100.

²⁵ Ibid. 55-100

descriptive. Rather than seeing adolescence merely as a period between childhood and adulthood, Erikson views adolescence as both a period of functional and active manner. Adolescence is "a period in which society takes a relatively hands-off posture, allowing the adolescence to experiment behaviorally and attempt to find himself [herself] and his[her] place."²⁶

Erikson understands adolescence in relation to "ego identity" and identity formation. Erikson says that identity relates both to an individual's unique development and his or her link with the unique values of a people. It is important to an understanding of identity to show concern for an individual's personal uniqueness, emanating from his or her own personal history as the person has perceived and constructed it, and his identification with a group to which the person feels he or she belongs.²⁷

On the other hand, Erikson points out that the adolescent may feel intensely all the setbacks and gains in the process of identity formation. Erikson states, "The end of adolescence thus is the stage of an overt identity crisis."²⁸ In other words, adolescents do not care that they are moving from concrete to formal thought; they know and care that they are having an "identity crisis."²⁹

²⁶ Manaster, 122.

²⁷ Erikson, *Identity and the Life Cycle*, 102.

²⁸ Ibid., 113.

²⁹ Kohlberg and Gilligan, 1075-76.

Important to relationships in the adolescent stage are the attitudes and opinions of peer group. Youth can develop the capacity for mutually supportive relationships with friends known as “intimacy.” Because traditions and family values are called into question, adolescents develop an enduring sense of identity mixed with confusion. Eventually, their growing identity can result in the virtue of fidelity if the youth resolve the crisis between identity and identity confusion.³⁰

In adolescence, those who are developing more quickly may experience grater conflict and turbulence. Even though adolescents are in a world in which morality, faith, religion and identity are in turmoil, they can get a feeling of security by maintaining consistently clear moral-judgement.

In this sense, cognitive, moral and affective development parallel each other. The cognitive development theory presupposes that both morality and faith are based on a perceptual process. People are growing toward a more universalized morality and faith. On the other hand, the psychosocial development theory is grounded in emotion which arise in response to social relationships. The goal is a healthy personality and a productive contribution to the culture.³¹ James Fowler’s faith development theory actually draws from both the cognitive and psychosocial theories.

In conclusion, a genuine understanding of cognitive and psychosocial development theory

³⁰ Manaster, 115-20

³¹ Miller, *Story and Context*, 207

can help educators understand adolescents and get involved in youth ministry more deeply.

CHAPTER 4

Identity Formation Theory of Youth

“Why were you searching for me?” Jesus asked. “Didn’t you know I had to be in my father’s house?” (Luke 2:49, NIV). As he was about to enter adulthood (his teen years) according to Luke’s Gospel, Jesus knew who he was and his mission in life. This experience of Jesus stands in marked contrast to the common wrestling among youth with “Who am I” question.¹

In the more structured societies of the past, teenagers did not deal with the question of identity in the same ways. Among other things, many young people who seek identity today do not get satisfying answers to their questions of identity because of the emphasis on materialism and individuality. Furthermore, in the face of inconsistent beliefs and ambiguous roles, youth experience conflicts and identity crises that can precipitate more difficulties. Namely, the paramount problem the young people face today in many industrial societies is how to formulate a viable and stable identity under uncertain and even hostile circumstances. On the basis of this assumption, I will present the meaning of identity as well as a theory of adolescent identity formation in order for educators to deal with youth problems more effectively.

The Definition of Identity

According to the *Random House Dictionary of the English Language*

¹ Ronald L. Koteskey, “Adolescence as a Cultural Invention,” in *Handbook of Youth Ministry*, eds. Donald Ratcliff and James A. Davis (Birmingham: Religious Education Press, 1991), 52.

identity is, "the condition or character as to who a person or what a thing is" and "the condition of being oneself or itself, and not another." Identity has its own distinctiveness and uniqueness. Thus, it helps us see things more clearly and assists in interpreting life experience. Lester Steele asserts:

Identity can be compared to a lens which helps us see things more clearly. It assists in interpreting life experiences. It also acts as governor, determining what aspects of change confronting someone are acceptable and what are not acceptable.²

Erikson presented his ideas of identity in the late 1960s. He is considered by many to be the foremost theorist of human development in the middle of the 20th century. In studying identity theory, Erikson was concerned with how individuals maintain or lose their sense of continuity as individuals over time and through many different situations. Especially, he was very interested in the psychological development of adolescence. He says:

The integration now taking place in the form of ego identity is. . . more than the sum of childhood identifications with the vicissitudes of the libido, with the aptitudes developed out of endowment, and with the opportunities offered in social roles. The sense of ego identity, then, is the accrued confidence that the inner sameness and continuity prepared in the past are matched by the sameness and continuity of one's meaning for others.³

Erikson explains identity as a wholeness to be achieved during the long years of childhood and in the anticipated future.⁴ He further suggests that identity formation starts

² Steele, 92.

³ Erikson, *Identity and the Life Cycle*, 50.

⁴ Erik H. Erikson, *Identity: Youth and Crisis* (New York: W. W. Norton, 1968), 87.

when the baby perceives his/her mother and feels acceptance in relationship with the mother.⁵ Therefore, he believes that the childhood years are a starting point of the adolescent stage, and adolescence prepares people to live and work for the future.

He thinks that identity includes "the style of one's individuality, and that this style coincides with the sameness and continuity of one's meaning for significant others in the immediate community."⁶ Erickson emphasizes here the social dimension of identity. Identity is "a unique product" of people to feel progressive continuity between who they have been and who they will become, in addition, identity is a process found "in the core of the individual and yet also in the core of his communal culture."⁷ It is actually a process which continues to play a role throughout all of a person's years.

In terms of identity statuses, Lester Steele twins to James Marcia's theory.⁸ James Marcia has researched and presented four identity statuses in youth, that is, identity diffused, identity moratorium, identity foreclosed, and identity achievements. First of all, an identity diffused is found in persons who have neither crisis nor active commitment. Young people in this type do not begin to think seriously of their occupation and value, nor do they make any major decisions about those areas of their lives. Secondly, identity moratorium is found

⁵ Erik H. Erikson, *Young Man Luther: A Study in Psychoanalysis and History* (New York: W. W. Norton, 1958), 115-25.

⁶ Erikson, *Identity: Youth and Crisis*, 50.

⁷ *Ibid.*, 22.

⁸ Steele, 92-93.

in persons who have experienced a crisis and are searching actively for alternatives; however, they have no achievements. Thirdly, identity foreclosure identifies persons who have not experienced crisis, but have made commitments. This commitment is not by their own efforts but by others—parents in particular. Finally, identity achievement describes persons who have experienced crisis as well as achievement as a result of active commitment.

Marcia maintains that moratorium is the prerequisite for achievement, as such, this is the preferable identity status for young people. On the other hand, youth in an identity foreclosed status “simply believe what significant others have told them to believe”⁹ without much serious reflection on their thoughts and faith.

Identity Formation Theory and Youth

Erikson draws a parallel between traumatized war victims and “severely conflicted young people whose sense of confusion is due. . . to a war within themselves.”¹⁰ He believes that the same psychological mechanism are at work for those who have “lost themselves” as a result of traumatic wartime experiences and those who have difficulties making the transition from childhood to adulthood.¹¹ Moreover, young people tend to “over-identity with heroes and peer groups and they can be extremely prejudiced, which

⁹ Ibid., 93

¹⁰ Erikson. *Identity: Youth and Crisis*, 17.

¹¹ Ibid.

could be their attempt to defend some small sense of identity against their confusion.”¹² Therefore, the task for young people is to get over confusion and achieve a sense of identity for their future.

Mija Sa also talks about six important developmental requirements of adolescence to prepare for the role of adult.¹³ The first one is the emotional freedom from their parents and close adults. The second is making a sound relationship between man and woman. The next is learning the role of man and woman. The fourth is preparation for job choice and tomorrow. Then, it is essential for youth to be a socially responsible citizen. Finally, learning social values and ethical guidelines is also an important requirement, for these values can be the youth’s guideline in life. The most important agenda of the above six requirements is identity formation. Identity can be formulated on the basis of the continuity of life in the past, present and future. In other words, humans can observe the past life, make an effort to refine it in the present, and control their behavior to effect future.¹⁴

Young people are in search of identity through difficulties, they want something to believe in, and they need a sense of hope and purpose. If youth lose their sense of identity, they are more confused and make a negative identity. As a result, they can not control their life or get along with the society.¹⁵ Identity is not simply formed overnight, but continues

¹² Steele, 92.

¹³ Sa, “ Adolescent Stage in Life Cycle Theory.”, 62. This theory is the Sa’s own work.

¹⁴ Ibid.

¹⁵ Erikson, *Identity: Youth and Crisis*, 212.

to develop in our adult lives. In general, identity is influenced by personal desires, significant others, the culture in which we live, and the particular historical moment in which we live. There are several theories about identity formation in youth.

Psychosocial Theory

First of all, the notion of identity formation is central to Erikson's understanding of human development.

Identity formation employs a process of simultaneous reflection and observation, a process taking place on all levels of mental functioning, by which others judge him in comparison to themselves and to typology significant to them; while he judges their way of judging him in the light of how he perceives himself in comparison to them and to types that have become relevant to him.¹⁶

Erikson also believes that religion, as a faithful system, can influence the identity formation of youth. Because religion is related to the social, psychological and unconscious area of youth through symbols, liturgy and narratives, it can help the youth formulate identity.¹⁷

Social-Cultural Theory

James Fowler maintains that the age range of twelve to eighteen is often characterized by the synthetic-conventional stage. At this stage, adolescents are established in interpersonal relationships, and God can be viewed as a trustworthy, lifelong friend who can

¹⁶ Ibid., 22-23.

¹⁷ Sa, 65.

always be counted upon.¹⁸ The significance of Fowler's work in this context is that it emphasizes the centrality of self-esteem in establishing interpersonal relationships in the world. Thus, it provides a starting point in dealing with adolescent needs for enhanced self-esteem.

Craig Dykstra writes that the process of identity formation is "a process of interpretation. . . our response to interpreted actions."¹⁹ What is unique during adolescence, he believes, is the development of personal responsibility for interpretation. During adolescence a person begins to decide how to interpret and respond. This process of interpretation takes place in the context of communities of interpretation, such as the school, the peer group, the family, the church, and the nation.²⁰

Ronald L. Koteskey also suggests that the identity formation of youth is related to their context of culture, community, religion and family setting.²¹ In *The Adolescent Experience*, Elizabeth Douvan and Joseph Adelson propose that at adolescence, the youngster must synthesize earlier identifications with personal qualities and relate them to social opportunities and social ideals.²²

Richard Evans asserts that the question of "Who am I" is always related to identity

¹⁸ Fowler, *Stage of Faith*, 151-73.

¹⁹ Craig Dykstra, "Agenda for Youth Ministry: Problems, Questions, and Strategies.", 75.

²⁰ Ibid. 76.

²¹ Ronald L. Koteskey, "Adolescence as a Cultural Invention.", 52-55.

²² Elizabeth Douvan and Joseph Adelson, *The Adolescent Experience* (New York: Wiley &

formation. This important question of identity is intermingled with people, culture, the living environment and the world in which people live. In other words, humans belong to groups: family, school church, society and nation. Thus, each person shares a similar view of the past, present, and future with others in the group. The group to which a person belongs plays a great role in formulating identity.²³

Ross Snyder says that “much of a person’s identity comes from knowing and believing the distinctiveness and rightness of the culture which has produced him [her] and in which his [her] life is situated.”²⁴ Moreover, a dependable sense of identity comes from being able to look at some objective manifestation of one’s self from deep inside, rather than anxiously asking “How do I feel?”²⁵ Adolescents’ relationships to others in community, church, school, peer groups and family appear to be related to useful to formulate their identity. Integrating into the social networks of community, church, and family, adolescents can develop their identity process.

Spiritual Theory

Lester Steele believes the conversion experience of youth is an indispensable element in formulating identity. Steele argues that a person who experiences a gradual conversion tends to have a higher level of identity formation achievement than do those who experience

Sons, 1966), 14.

²³ Richard I. Evans, *Dialogue with Erik Erikson* (New York: Harper & Row, 1967), 104.

²⁴ Snyder, 60.

²⁵ Ibid. 78.

radical conversion. Thus, spiritual conversion experiences and identity formations are mutually supportive processes.²⁶ When adolescents experience God and, develop a Christian world view through reflection and active searching, they are able to facilitate a strong personal identity.²⁷

Similarly, Stephen D. Jones also asserts that shaping the faith of youth is the starting point in formulating identity. This faith shaping can be nurtured in the home and in the church and with adolescent peers.²⁸ He believes that home is an important place for youth to feel the root of Christian faith naturally; church is a place where youth can get a clear vision and value of faith community; a peer group is pivotal for providing faith shaping memories through a retreats, mission trips, camps, and youth musicals.²⁹ In sum, the spiritual experiences of conversion and nurturing are essential ingredients in formulating identity.

Biological Theory

Interestingly, biological influences also appear to be an element to formulating self-image and self-esteem. As Sprinthal and Collins argue, “The effects of the primary physical changes of adolescence are socially mediated by the reactions of self and others.”³⁰ Accordingly, identity formation is also determined by expectations about

²⁶ Steele, 94-95.

²⁷ Ibid., 95

²⁸ Jones, 83-88.

²⁹ Ibid.

³⁰ Norman A. Sprinthal and W. Andrew Collins, *Adolescent Psychology: A Developmental View*

physical characteristics. Adolescents often experience embarrassment in association with physical changes; they are sometimes ashamed or excited by the changes in their bodies. This worry and surprise can influence on identity formation.

I believe that the identity formation of youth is not related to only one factor but to a mixture of several elements. First of all, identity formation is molded by relationships with others. Culture also affects the process, as do the communities in which the youth are involved: school, church, family and peer group. A major factor is their spirituality. Spiritual formation is not achieved all at once, but is a process that continues on into maturity. In sum, the identity formation of youth is influenced by personal desires, significant others, spiritual moments, the culture in which youth live, physical changes and the particular historical moment.

CHAPTER 5

The Theory of Identity Formation Curriculum

The task of developing healthy identity in Korean youth is not easy. However, neither is it impossible. Against the critique of Korean culture, the understanding of adolescence in development theory and the background of the theory of identity formation, I would like to create guideline for an identity formation program. In this chapter, I will present the theological assumptions of this curriculum. Namely, I will show the theory of Campbell Wyckoff because of its simplicity and applicability. I will also illustrate the "traditioning" theory of Mary Elizabeth Moore because it is attuned to the theme of identity formation curriculum. Finally, I will describe five concrete themes of an identity formation curriculum.

Curriculum Theory of Campbell Wyckoff

Campbell Wyckoff describes categories of curriculum development in *Theory and Design of Christian Education Curriculum*.¹ He presents six main categories; the objective (why), the scope (what), the context (where), the process (how), the participants (who), and the time (When). Among these categories, I will focus on his ideas concerning the scope,

¹ Campbell Wyckoff, *Theory and Design of Christian Education Curriculum* (Philadelphia: Westminster Press, 1961), 56-146.

context, process and participant. The scope is the whole field of relationships—God, humanity, nature, and history--in light of the gospel.² The context is the church as the setting for Christian education. As bound to the church context, “Christian education partakes of the whole objective and mission of the church, in teaching persons about that objective and mission and leading persons to undertake the church’s mission and ministry intelligently and effectively.”³ The process refers to the involvement of persons in the life and work of the church; it is both theological and functional. This process can be seen as the church carries out its functions of worship, study, action, stewardship, fellowship and creative expression of its faith and life.⁴ The participants are the learners, teachers and God himself.⁵

Wyckoff also anticipates the future of Christian education. First, Christian education should emphasize aesthetic aspects of learning. Christian educators should employ various methods such as drama, singing, dance and video in their work. He also points out

² Ibid, 122-29.

³ Wyckoff, “Understanding Your Church Curriculum,” *Princeton Seminary Bulletin* 63, no. 1 (July 1970): 79-80.

⁴ Wyckoff, *Theory and Design of Christian Education Curriculum*, 131-34.

⁵ Wyckoff, “Understanding Your Church Curriculum.”,

that Christian education should be based on multicultural, multiracial and pluralistic concerns. He emphasizes further, the importance of Christian education in the local setting. This thought implies that every theory is to be tested in a local church situation; that is, every theory should be practical.⁶

Wyckoff's theories are applicable to the Korean situation for several reasons. For one thing, most Korean curriculum is church centered. The church in Korea is one of the important places that youth can develop their faith as well as share their feelings and struggles with each other. Second, a curriculum with a mixture of splendid methods and an emphasis on aesthetic aspects will be attractive and effective for Koreans to formulate their identity. Third, since this program is to be carried out by both the teacher and students together with the help of God, it encourages communication and cooperation between adults and youth. Finally, this activity deals with every aspect of the students' lives and environment: God, humanity, nature, and history.

Traditioning Theory of Mary Elizabeth Moore

In *Education for Continuity and Change*, Mary Elizabeth Moore points out that "the primary goals of Christian religious education are knowledge with understanding and the

⁶ Campbell Wyckoff, "From Practice to Theory-And Back Again," in *Modern Masters of Religious Education*, ed. Marlene Mayr (Birmingham: Religious Education Press, 1983), 113-14

transformation of person's action, beliefs, and values. . . . Neither goal can be met without the other."⁷ Additionally, Moore calls attention to the hope and future dimensions in Christian religious education, in order to supplement the common concerns with historical tradition and contemporary experience.⁸

According to her, religious education should encompass opposites, such as continuity (the past or history) and change (the future).⁹ She says that both poles should have prominence in the "traditioning community."¹⁰ "Traditioning," she maintains, "requires passing on the past and looking forward toward the future, for the sake of transforming our praxis in the present."¹¹ In other words, her "traditioning model" implies that the Christian community encounters God and the world in their present experience and the community is motivated toward the future.¹² In this sense, the purpose of the

⁷ Mary Elizabeth Moore, *Education for Continuity and Change: A New Model for Christian Religious Education* (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1983), 132-33.

⁸ Ibid., 14.

⁹ Ibid., 17.

¹⁰ Ibid., 121.

¹¹ Ibid., 145.

¹² Ibid., 121.

“traditioning” model of Christian religious education is to maximize both continuity and transformation.¹³

This “traditioning” model includes the comprehensive goals of knowledge with understanding and transformation. Moreover, methodologically, she suggests both transmission (done creatively) and reflection (both “depth” and “critical”). She also identifies four basic characteristics of the traditioning model. The first characteristic is the dialogue between individuals and groups about various texts and interpretations of those texts. The second is one of stimulating curiosity and creativity by confronting burning questions, exciting ideas, and problems to be solved. Third, this model stimulates a sense of wonder before the mysteries of life and hope for the future. Finally, it integrates thought, feeling, and action.¹⁴

Moore maintains that a model is needed that emphasizes a person’s intense relationship with the past and helps people live in a changing present and respond to God’s call forward to the future. The traditioning model of Christian religious education is suggested in order to fulfill this need. The term “continuity” is the associated with a transmissive model of education. It emphasizes the imparting of tradition with its faith

¹³ Ibid., 17-18.

¹⁴ Ibid., 129-30.

story. On the other hand, “change” is associated with an experiential approach that accentuates contemporary existence and experience. Neither of these positions is adequate in itself. Therefore, Moore assumes that a traditioning model is a more inclusive and useful alternative. The traditioning model not only shares with the transmissive and experiential models, but also interweaves past, present and future.¹⁵

To put it another way, as a dynamic life-changing approach to education, the traditioning model is a process by which the historical tradition is remembered and transformed as the Christian community encounters God and the world in the present and as they are motivated toward the future.

Moore's traditioning model is applicable to my theme. Most of all, a Christian educator must take into account the past, present, and future in a kind of Trinitarian manner with equal emphasis on all three dimensions. This identity formation curriculum encourages youth to cultivate their identity in the present through relationships with people and the earth around them while connecting our traditional faith in God (the past) with expectation and helping youth to prepare for vision (the future). This tripartite emphasis eliminates the insistent dualism which has characterized Christian religious education in the

¹⁵ Ibid., 122-23

past with transmissive versus experience based approaches.

The Theme of Identity Formation Curriculum

In this section, I will show how that these educational themes are related to central theological affirmations. I will describe the five primary theological themes of an identity formation curriculum, and I will present the themes in terms of time: the past (encountering God); the present (enlarging relationships with others, experiencing the present reign of God, engaging in the present pain of the earth); and the future (envisioning the future)..

Encountering God

In identity formation curriculum, the first goal must be that youth encounter God. Throughout this program, young people experience divine encounters in human life. Tom Zanzig explains that this is a “moment of recognition” and an “aha moment.”¹⁶ This moment is “the great experience of recognizing the personal significance of a faith relationship with an infinitely loving God.”¹⁷ This is an important experience for youth and it may take many forms.

Thomas Merton explains the inner experience of God like this.

¹⁶ Tom Zanzig, “Youth Ministry: Reflection and Direction,” in *Readings and Resources in Youth Ministry*, ed. Michael Warren (Winona, Minn.: Saint Mary’s Press, 1987), 47.

¹⁷ Ibid, 57.

Our inner self awakens, with a momentary flash, in the instant of recognition when we say "Yes!" to the indwelling Divine Persons. We are only really ourselves when we completely consent to "receive the glory of God into ourselves. Our true self is, then, the self that receives freely and gladly the missions that are God's supreme gift to His sons [and daughter].¹⁸

Through identity formation curriculum, the educator can help youth to become increasingly aware of God's seeking love and to respond in faith and love. This curriculum helps adolescents think of themselves as the mirror image of God because God has chosen them to reflect God's being.¹⁹

Enlarging Relationships with Others

Craig Dykstra and Dorothy C. Bass summarize the theme of human relationships as follows: "How important it is to have companions as we seek life-giving ways of life!"²⁰ The Christian's way of life is concerned about relationships: our relationship with God and our relationships with one another. In other words, we belong to God, and we are brother and sister with one another. Moreover, we can share Christ's love for all people without

¹⁸ Thomas Merton, *New Seeds of Contemplation* (New York: New Directions Publishing, 1961), 4

¹⁹ Mark Springer and Cheryl Smith, *The Seven Principles of Effective Youth Ministry: A Handbook for Spiritual Growth* (San Jose: Resource Publication, 1993), 95.

²⁰ Craig Dykstra and Dorothy C. Bass, "Times of Yearning, Practices of Faith," in *Practicing Our Faith: A Way of Life for a Searching People*, ed. Dorothy C. Bass (San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 1997), 4.

prejudice.²¹

According to Ross Snyder, each person as a unique subject meets another subject; an interpersonal relationship is a result of communication and co-creation.²² Identity formation curriculum also focuses on how well the students know their friends and parents. In this curriculum for youth, helping teens develop personal relationships with teens and with parents that facilitate the formation of Christian personalities is of central concern. In addition, youth are encouraged to be open to others.

Experiencing the Present Reign of God

Youth can experience the reign of God in this society through identity formation curriculum. This theme is the weakest part in Korea. I believe that youth, as children of God, must see the pain of this society. This theme, in Maria Harris's theory of ministry, is related to the prophetic role of church. This role is "a journey outward to those in need, even to the selling of worldly possessions."²³ Thomas H. Groome also defines Christian religious education as "a political activity with pilgrims in time that deliberately and intentionally attends with them to the activity of God in our present, to the Story of the

²¹ Ibid. 4-5.

²² Snyder, 51-54.

²³ Maria Harris, *Portrait of Youth Ministry* (New York: Paulist Press, 1981), 14.

Christian faith community, and to the vision of God's Kingdom, the seeds of which are already among us."²⁴ Both Harris and Groome express passion for political (social transformative) activity. Furthermore, Gustavo Gutierrez maintains that the way of showing mercy to the poor and the oppressed in the present is the experience of Kingdom of God in the midst.²⁵

From the curriculum developed in this project, youth can learn that the real life that God wants is not based on selfishness but altruism. Looking at the needs of this society, youth can develop their responsibility as disciples of God. This transition is one of the processes of identity formation.

Engaging in the Pain of the Earth

This theme will soon be central in Korea. Caring for the earth, or sympathizing with the earth as a part of God is a crucial theological theme nowadays. Salley MaFague points out that God not only actively participates in, but also feels the pain of, all living things.²⁶

²⁴ Thomas H. Groome, *Christian Religious Education: Sharing Our Story and Vision* (San Francisco: Harper and Row, 1980), 25.

²⁵ Gustavo Gutierrez, *The God of Life*, trans. Matthew J. O'Connell (Maryknoll: Orbis Books, 1991), 8, 47, 78-80.

²⁶ Sallie McFague, *The Body of God: An Ecological Theology* (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 1993), 176.

Alvin Pitcher also believes that the biological and physical world that surrounds us is connected to us. Thus, God can say something to us through nature. This implies that "interconnection between persons and nature" is needed in the world. Therefore, people have to listen carefully to nature in order to sustain themselves.²⁷

We must teach our youth to preserve nature. It is necessary for adolescents to have right consciousness and right action in order to think ecologically. Namely, they must be attuned to the importance of responsibility for nature. Additionally, adolescents should regard this global village (the earth) as a whole of internal relation.²⁸ This also can be taught through an identity formation curriculum. This study supports and nourishes a reverence for life. From this study, youth learn to see themselves as preservers of nature, which God created for all living creatures.

Envisioning the Future

Every youth needs to recognize that God deals with him or her generously. When they accept the point of view that they are loved and valued by God, they are freed to love and accept themselves. This sense helps them to have a vision. Adolescents can then find the

²⁷ William Alvin Pitcher, *Listen to the Crying of the Earth: Cultivating Creation Communities* (Cleveland: Pilgrim Press, 1993), 72-73

²⁸ Jay B. McDaniel, *Earth, Sky, Gods and Mortals: A Theology of Ecology for the 21 st Century* (Mystic, Conn: Twenty-Third Publications, 1990), 14-27

hope of possibility, risk the status quo, and create an alternative future.²⁹ Thus, youth can be transformers as well as optimistic persons for the future. Young people need to be prepared for their future. When they study and search for a meaningful life, they need to have clear vision with the conviction that “God has sustained many others in similar need.”³⁰

This unique construction of five theological identity formation themes is based on the curriculum theory of Campell Wyckoff and the “continuity and change” theory of Mary Elizabeth Moore. Underlying the theme is the confidence that youth can cultivate their identity in the present through their precious memory of past experience with God as well as by preparation for their future.

²⁹ Foster, *Educating Congregation*, 131-33,

³⁰ Murray, *Teaching the Bible to Adult and Youth*, 22.

CHAPTER 6

The Design of an Identity Formation Curriculum

Teaching something is a dynamic activity. Not only do teacher and student journey together but they are also mutually engaged in a growing awareness of the intersectional nature of reality. Throughout this process, the past offers context and content, the present provides the participants with existential awareness of the issues, and the future entices the persons forward with all of its potential and novelty.

In this sense, curriculum can be described as a plan to help people get in touch with their own experiences, the experiences of others, and with expectations for the future, communicating and interpreting historical tradition. Hence, curriculum designers need to pay special attention to the specific and global forces that influence individuals on their journey.

As described in Chapter 2, critical issues facing Korean youth include their exposure to the mass media, uncertainty of identity, and over expectations from their parents. Youth ministry can help youth deal with these dilemmas, but it can also help parents to understand the agony of their children. In this sense, this curriculum presents a model to strengthen youth to formulate their identity. What is offered in this chapter is actually a curriculum resource that points in the direction of a full plan for identity formation curriculum. This could be used in Korea to help teenagers think more seriously about themselves.

The Summary of Identity Formation Curriculum Resource

The purpose of this curriculum resource is to influence teens to discover their identity in God and in the church community. Marria Harris, in *Fashion Me a People*, maintains that the vocational categories are essential for remodeling the curriculum of the church.¹ This identity formation curriculum includes these vocational elements because youth's identity is related to youth's vocation in the large community. The program described below is designed for 7th to 12th grade students. It requires several volunteers, teachers, and some amount of budget to be implemented; it will take at least two months to prepare. It is intended for a vacation period. If the church wants to use it during the semester, it can be used one session per month.

The Contents of Identity Formation Curriculum

Day One: Ice Breaking (Exposure)

- Preparation: The Bible, Several pieces of papers, pens, cassette tape and player
- Background: The basic idea of this program is to help youth imagine themselves in God's position. Then, they might also regard themselves in relationships with others. The meditation starts inviting the youth to ask these questions of themselves.
 1. Think about your greatest moment, saddest moment
 2. Describe the meaning of your life.

¹ Harris, *Fashion Me on People*, 75-166. Harris describes these subjects in "The Vocation" section as a way to form education in the church: koinonia- -the curriculum of community; liturgia- -the curriculum of prayer; didache- the curriculum of teaching; kerygma- the curriculum of proclamation; diakonia- the curriculum of service.

While the youth think about these questions, the teacher turns on a "meditation" tape in order to help students meditate deeply. This session is very important because students can reflect on themselves. Therefore, the teacher gives the students plenty of time for meditation.

- Activity: After finishing the meditation time, the teacher suggests that students write a letter to God about their most pressing problem. The teacher explains the full activity first so that youth will know in advance that the letters will be shared. The teacher passes on a paper and pen to the students, and encourages them to write down their dilemmas freely. Then, the teacher gathers the letters and redistributes the letters to other students one by one. Then, every student who receives another student's letter writes an answer from God's position. All students not only write a letter to God but also write an answer to another friend about their problem from God's position. Finally, they share their feelings with one another after receiving the answer from their friend.

- Closing: When they are finished, the teacher asks:

1. What problems have you recognized in yourself and others?
2. How can you support your friends as they face their problems?
3. Is there any similarity and difference between your problem and that of your friend?
4. Who is going to help me and my friend?

Finally, all of the participants sing a " We are together in Bond of Love" together hand

in hand, and close with the Lord's Prayer.

Day Two: Encountering God

- Preparation: The Bible, several pieces of paper for drawing(11" x 17") markers, and scotch tape
- Background: The basic idea behind this approach is to read the text and ask the three questions that are central to any text:
 1. What does it say about God?
 2. What does it say about us as human beings?
 3. What does it say about the relationship between the two?

For this approach, it is important to divide the class into three groups, each of which will read the passage and answer one of the questions. Then the three groups report on what they discovered. It is important that the class not get sidetracked into other issues, such as "Did it really happen?" or "How could it have happened?" because of the focus of this session. The group is reading only for theological content: God, us, relationship. It is also important that the teacher not be the answer giver, but only one of many searchers. The source of information is the text itself, not the teacher.

- Bible text: Genesis 1:1-2:3 (the first story of creation)

Begin by having someone read the story to the whole class. Explain the process you will be going through and then divide the class into three groups. Assign each group one of the

three topics. Give the groups several minutes to re-read the passage and answer one of the questions. Make sure each group has a facilitator who will keep things going, a recorder who will keep notes, and a reporter who will make a verbal presentation.

- Activity: Here each of the groups makes its report on large drawing paper. Possible answers might include:

God	Us	Relationship
powerful, creator,	creature, a part of	we are dependent
source of everything,	creation, made in	upon God, God put
brings order out of	image of God, have	a lot of effort into
disorder, creates	responsibility for	creating us
good	all of creation, good	

As each group finishes its report, see if anyone else in the room can add anything on that topic. Repeat this process with the other two groups.

- Closing: When you are finished, invite the group to draw conclusions:
 1. What have you learned about God from this passage?
 2. How does this fit what you already know about God?
 3. What surprised you?

Repeat these three questions on the other topics of humanity and relationships.²

Day Three: Enlarging Relationships with Others

- Preparation: The Bible, chairs, “Getting to know You” statement sheet,

Whistle or bell

- Background: The focus of this approach to Bible study is what it has to say about relationships. There are two levels of relationship to be focused on:

1. My relationship with myself.
2. My relationship with other people.

The key to this Bible study is to understand that the basic qualities of relationships remain unchanged over the ages. In the stories of the Bible, we see ourselves and our relationships with others.

- Bible text; Psalm 8

Read the Psalm out loud. Answer any questions anyone has about the psalm. Then assign the questions of relationship to others. Give them time to read the passage and identify the aspects of relationship they are looking for. Have each person share one word or sentence about his/her findings. After each person shares, involve the class in a discussion of what the

² Walt Marcum, *Living in The Light*, 21-22. Some of the references of Marcum are revised to fit this session.

passage is saying and how it might apply to us today.³

- Activity: Line up chairs in two long rows with chairs opposite each other. Designate one row "A" and one row "B." The leader asks each person to take a seat facing someone else. Tell the group that, as a way of getting to know each other and having some fun, an open-ended statement will first be read. Then each pair of persons takes a turn completing that statement. Indicate that, after a short amount of time, a bell will be rung or a whistle blown. At that time, each person in row "A" is requested to move one chair to the right. The person at the end gets up and walks to the other end of row "A" and takes the vacant seat. The next statement is then read and the process is continued with persons in row "A" moving one chair to the right at each signal.

* Hand out Sample⁴ "Getting To Know You" Statement

1. When I have some free time I like to ...
2. My favorite time of the year is...
3. At Christmas I...
4. Some things I enjoy doing with friends are...
5. Being rich means...
6. A talent that I have is...

³ Marcum, 28-29. Background and Bible text sections are revised by adopting the idea of Marcum.

⁴ The sample of open-ended statements is drawn from National Council of the Churches of Christ in the U.S.A., *Make a World of Difference: Creative Activities for Global Learning* (New York: Friendship Press, 1990)

7. The most important thing that we need to teach children today is...
 8. My favorite food to cook/bake or eat...
 9. The world problem that I am most concerned about is...
 10. The last book I read was titled...
 11. Older people...
 12. In my church, I share my time and talents by...
 13. If I had to give up everything but one thing that I own, the one thing I would keep would be...
 14. I think the most difficult thing that Christ told us to do is...
 15. My favorite music to listen to is...
 16. A poor person is someone who...
 17. I think the church is...
 18. My favorite recreational activity is...
 19. Something my church or community is doing to help those in need is...
 20. Something that I enjoy doing by myself is... ⁵
- Closing: After the activity, the leader encourages some students to share of their findings regarding the uniqueness of themselves as well as the importance of others. Finally, all of the participants say “Thank you!” or “I appreciate...” to one another with a hug or

⁵ NCC(U.S.A.), *Make a World of Difference*, 33-35.

handshake freely.

Day Four: Experiencing the Present Reign of God

- Preparation: Several banners which embody God's call in a bold, creative, festive manner.

The banners are made with colorful cloth. Slogans are printed on heavy sheets of posterboard. Sample slogans are listed at the end of this session, but these preparations need to be set up before the session.

- Background: Teachers and volunteers display the banners in the sanctuary. They make the slogans by stapling heavy sheets of posterboard on the wall of the sanctuary before class to help students feel the mood of theme at that day. Every participant looks at these banners and slogan posters to reflect on the meaning of present reign of God.
- Bible Study: These Bible study verses are related to the theme of the reign of God. Teacher and group leaders choose these verses in advance. Then, prepare to read the youth in a study of the reign of God as revealed in the Bible

Psalm 82	Justice
Psalm 146:4-9	Hunger
Proverbs 14:20-21	Justice
Proverbs 19:17	Justice
Proverbs 21:13	Justice
Isaiah 5:1-7	Justice

Matthew 6:25-34

Hunger

Acts 2:32-35, 42-47

Justice

The leader divides the class into eight groups, each of which will read one passage and meditate on the meaning of this passage. Then, each group discusses what they have found in the passage, and prepares to report on what they discover, drawing from their own ideas and their interpretation of the biblical passage. When the groups come together, each group shares their ideas about ways to fulfill the reign of God in this society.

- Activity: Each group tours to see the slogans posted on the wall, picks up a banner, slowly making a circle. The youth are invited to meditate on the needs of this society for a few minutes. Finally, every member shouts aloud each slogan after the leader.

* Slogan examples are taken from the National Council of Churches' *Make a World of Difference*:

"Nurture the land; it's all we've got."

"A well-fed world is more secure than a well-armed world."

"There is no way to peace, peace is the way."

"There's enough for each person's need, but not enough for each person's greed."

"Shared bread tastes better!"

"Bread not bombs!"

"We are the world."

“When the last hungry child eats, we will all become more human.”

“We must rapidly begin the shift from a thing-oriented society to a person-oriented society!”⁶

- Closing: Give the each participant time for a closing prayer in solitude. After two or three minutes, join in a prayer circle and close with the Lord’s Prayer.

Day Five: Engaging the Pain of the Earth.

- Preparation: The United Methodist Book of Worship, The Bible, and several pictures that show the wounds of the earth (gathered from magazine and other sources).
- Background: Display pictures on the floor. The students are to see and meditate on the meaning of those pictures. After that, the leader asks some questions to the students as follows;
 1. What can you see to be the pain of the earth from the pictures?
 2. If you were an educator (a political leader, a pastor or a youth), how would respond to this pain?
 3. As a young person, how will you respond to this pain?
- Bible verse: Genesis 1:24-2:3

The leader speaks for ten minutes about the meaning of this text; especially noting that God created the earth for all living being to live harmoniously. The teacher then relates the Bible text to ecological issues, the damage that has resulted from our misuse or neglect, and

⁶ NCC(U.S.A.), 141-42

ways that people can protect the creation. After the presentation, all of the youth gather into three groups. Each group discusses the following;

1. What is the primary issue of this text?
 2. How do we become involved with God's action mentioned in this text in our daily activities?
 3. What is the role of humanity related to the pain of the earth as a creature in the image of God?
- Activity and closing: After the discussion, all gather together, and each group presents their discovery of the importance of eco-justice with a pantomime. Before finishing the session, all people read the prayer in the United Methodist Book of Worship.

O Gracious God, let us remember that every part of what You have created is sacred
Every shining pine needle, every sandy shore,.
every mist in the dark woods,
every clearing and humming insect is holy
The rocky crest, the meadow, the beasts and all the people,
All belong to the same family.
Teach your children that the earth is sacred
Whatever befalls the earth befalls the children of the earth
We are part of the earth, and the earth is part of earth...
Our God is the same God, whose compassion is equal for all.
For we did not weave the web of life.
We are merely a strand in it.
Whatever we do to the web we do to ourselves.
Let us give thanks for the web and the circle that connects us.
Thanks be to God, the God of all.⁷

⁷ *The United Methodist Book of Worship* (Nashville: The United Methodist Publishing House, 1992), 426.

Day Six: Envisioning the Future

- Preparation: The Bible, copies of “How will I spend my life...,” Reunion Exercise for distribution(See the end of this session), and several pencils
- Background: Explain to the group that they will reflect on all they have learned so far through an imaginary reunion of the group. Ask them to relax and allow their imaginations to flow freely. They are to imagine what they might be doing ten years from now. They are to imagine that they are attending a happy reunion party. At the party they will catch up on news about each other and share news about their current jobs. Hand out copies of the Reunion Exercise (see exercise at the end of session). Explain the handout and have the participants fill in responses on as many of the questions as possible. Allow some time for youth to fill out their responses. Then, introduce what they are to do as they walk around. After about 15 minutes of walking around and talking with each other at the reunion, have the participants gather to discuss what they have learned about each other.

Reunion Exercise

Imagine yourself at a reunion of this class ten years from now. Imagine the kind of person you will have become. Don't worry about whether or not anything is possible; with your imagination, everything is possible!

Be yourself, and jot down some notes in answer to these questions about yourself ten years from now.

1. Where do you live?

2. Are you married, single, or divorced?
3. Do you have any children? Describe them briefly?
4. What work do you do?
5. How did you decide to do this type of work?
6. What satisfactions do you get from your work?
7. Who benefits from your work?
8. How does your faith influence your work, if at all?
9. What would you like to accomplish before you retire?
10. What do you do in your spare time?⁸

⁸ David Ng, "How Have I Spent My Life?" in *Asian Pacific American Youth Ministry: Planning, Help and Programs*, eds. David Ng (Valley Forge: Judson Press, 1988), 16

- Bible study: Proverb 29:18, Acts 2:17

All read the Bible together. Provide an opportunity for the youth to engage in personal reflection on vision, vocation and work related to these verses. Allow several minutes for this.

Activity: Allow time for the participants to jot notes in response to the vocational questions below. Teachers will encourage youth to use their imaginations, and to think about what is possible for them to do with their lives in the future. Give each youth an opportunity to reflect on the vocational questions for several minutes.

Allow time for personal reflection, invite anyone who wishes to share a few thoughts brought out by the exercise (but do not push or pry for responses). Lead the participants in a unison reading of the Bible study verses. Then close with a prayer which incorporates the concepts in the Bible verse. ⁹

How Will I Spend My Life for My Vocation

Jot down some notes in response to each question below:

A. What Questions and concerns do I have about my career and vocation for the future?

B. What questions and concerns do I have about social justice?

C. What contributions do I think youth Christians can make to society?

⁹ David Ng, "My People's Call to Me," in *Asian Pacific American Youth Ministry*, 154.

D How can I be helped by biblical perspectives as I choose a job and a career?

E. What are some possibilities for the church community's contribution to the future of the world?

F. What things do I need to do as I make my decision for the future?¹⁰

Day Seven: New Life Celebration. ¹¹

- Preparation: The Bible, several snacks and drinks that the youth will enjoy in their celebration.
- Background: This program is held on the last day. Usually, It is a little different from the previous six programs in style. This activity is a kind of new start celebration of the students. Therefore, the teacher invites the parents and the elders of the church. The parents, elders and friends should be seated before this celebration. Moreover, the teacher prepares small snacks and drinks for fellowship after this celebration.

¹⁰ Adopted from David Ng, "How Have I Spent My Life? ", 159.

¹¹ Maria Harris, *Women and Teaching: Themes for a Spirituality of Pedagogy* (New York: Paulist Press, 1988), 77-81. This new life celebration is related to the theme used by Harris of birthing as a way to explain a new beginning in spirituality. People have an experience of birthing when they feel the grace of God.

- Activity: First of all, the students proceed to the main sanctuary and take seats. Then, they make vows by themselves in silent prayer, such as a vow to God and the congregation to live positively and to help others. The next step is for the students to tell their new resolutions to other friends one by one. As they share their resolutions with their friends, they have a chance to commit themselves to helping each other make a new start in the world with God. Then, all students take each other by the hand and shout with joy in front of the church members and their parents. Then, a pastor reads the Bible "Therefore, if any one is in Christ, he [she] is a new creation; the old has gone, the new has come!" (2 Cor. 5:17). The pastor proclaims a new beginning of life in God for the students. Afterward, students also thank their friends, parents, teachers and God for their spiritual, educational, mental and emotional support. Regarding this day as their turning point, the students leave the main sanctuary. At that moment, all participants congratulate the students on their new life by cheering and clapping.

The Evaluation of Identity Formation Curriculum

One of the primary concerns of Korean youth ministry is how the educator enhances identity formation in youth. The formation of identity is not accomplished by just one factor. It is a mixture of several elements. In *The Care and Counseling of Youth in the Church*, Paul B. Irwin summarizes the tasks of adolescent identity formation.¹² He writes of four areas of

¹² Paul B Irwin, *The Care and Counseling of Youth in the Church* (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1975), 17.

formation. The first one is finding acceptance within the community, the second thing is deepening interpersonal communication, the next thing is shaping an ideology or vision of life, and the last one is achieving vocational direction. Identity formation for youth is related to the relationships with others, culture, the communities, peer groups and their own spirituality.

In the Korean cultural context, harmful effects of the mass media, the burden of studying and a lack of communication with their parents hamper a lot of youth. Usually, the educator and the teachers have emphasized Bible Study no matter what the students' situation is. As discussed earlier, this attempt is similar to the banking concept of education that Paulo Freire described in his *Pedagogy of the Oppressed*.¹³ According to him, the banking concept of education, which is an education of imposing knowledge on students no matter what their situation, has the possibility of controlling the thinking and action of the students. As a result, it prevents them from thinking creatively. Further, dry Bible studies in Korean youth ministry lead some youth to leave the church because it does not address their needs: the methods and themes of Bible study are too monotonous to make church life enticing for youth.

How does Korean ministry lead youth to discover and construct their identity in this new time? What kinds of methods should educators use in youth ministry? Which programs are appropriate for youth ministry? With these issues in mind, I have presented an identity formation curriculum resource, intended as a guideline for programs that address the youth

¹³ Freire, 58-59.

identity crisis.

To strengthen this program, I have adopted the educational theory of Wyckoff. I use his theory because it is somewhat helpful for the development of this curriculum. Its objective is to help people become aware of God's revelation, to be who they are, and to be disciples in the world in relationship with others. The curriculum resource presented in this chapter does help youth be aware of themselves while living in relationship with God, others, and the earth. Moreover, the resource responds to Wyckoff's concern for education in the context of the church. The resource is design for a church setting because the church is an important place for youth to develop relationships and to feel safe. Finally, as Wyckoff emphasizes the importance of aesthetic methods in Christian education, this program uses a variety of approaches to interest youth.

In terms of theme, an insight from Mary Elizabeth Moore's theory of "traditioning" is helpful. To transform the present praxis, education has to balance between passion for the past and looking forward to the future. The theme of this identity formation curriculum follows this theory. To transform their turbulent identity crisis, youth need to experience the gracious everlasting love of God and study the Bible and other historical sources, as well as to seek vision for their future. In addition, they must engage in relationships with other people and work for social justice and the pain of the earth in the present. Through these experiences, youth can develop their identity.

One of the things that I would criticize about this program is that it is a church centered program. Even though the church setting in Korea is very important for young people, youth ministry must try to help them in cooperation with their family and school as well. Every educator in Korea must seek ways to consolidate young people's relationships with church, family and school. I also would suggest that the roles of worship, fellowship, service and stewardship in youth ministry all play an essential role in formulating their identity. These splendid practices offer vital energy to strengthen youth in their search for identity. Participating in these practices, youth can realize joy in their relationships with God, friends, teachers and parents. This process of encouraging joy contributes much to the identity of youth.

CHAPTER 7

Envisioning Youth Ministry

Regarding vision for youth ministry in Korea, I get an insight from Dr. Joon Kwan Un. He is a Christian education professor of Yonsei University in Seoul. He proposes a vision for the Korean church in his recent book *Theological Ecclesiology* and several additional articles.

Theological Ecclesiology of Dr. Un

Un believes that the Korean church confronts the challenge of stagnation in church growth. This problem is due not only to the overemphasis on individual conversion, clericalism and fundamental dogmatism in the church, but also to the gradual disappearance of “pastor’s dedication, mission zeal and ambitious programs for the establishment of local churches.”¹

Un believes that the major problem is related to disconnectedness. In other words, Korean Churches are faced with the loss of inner connectedness because of the lack of pastors’ dedication, and because of shamanistic fortune beliefs and unethical lifestyles among Christians.² Moreover, the disconnectedness of the churches involves several kinds of division---“between spirituality and professionalism, between theological education

¹ Joon Kwan Un, "Christian Education as Historical Transformation" paper presented at Paul B. Irwin Lecture, Claremont School of Theology, Claremont, Calif, 31 March 1992, 8.

² Joon Kwan Un, "Transformative Paradigm of the Korean Church: After Church Growth," *Theology and Modern Times* 22 (June 1997): 201.

and parish ministry, between conservative theology and liberal theology, between theoretical theology and practical theology, and between the clergy and the laity.”³ This also affects church growth. These problems result in a loss of children and youth as well as a loss of adult church members.⁴ Therefore, the Korean church needs a renewal movement to prepare to do work for the future.⁵

Un argues that what is most needed in this tough situation of Korea is looking forward to a vision. Through such a vision, people could construct a "transformed community" in Christ and churches could make the best use of their physical and spiritual resources. The unity of the Christian community is "the single most important dimension for the church to deal with at present.”⁶ Un elaborates about the path to unity: “A theology of integration potentially could help the church envision how the transformed community might become a 'transforming community in society and history.”⁷

On the basis of this assumption, Dr. Un presents a new paradigm of theological movement toward the Kingdom of God to renew every Korean church. The

³ Joon Kwan Un, "After Church Growth in Korea: Search for an Alternative Ecclesial Model," *International Journal of Practical Theology* 1 (1997): 168

⁴ Un, "Transformative Paradigm of the Korean Church," 193.

⁵ Joon Kwan Un, *Sinhakjuk Kohoeron* [Theological ecclesiology: based on the relation between basileia and ecclesia] (Seoul: Yonsei University Press, 1995), 37-40.

⁶ Un, "After Church Growth in Korea," 168.

⁷ Ibid.

ecclesiological theme of the Kingdom of God genuinely represents a new theological structure. This paradigm offers a strong eschatological view. In it, the church has a role to witness as an eschatological community which takes responsibility for the whole of history.⁸ This concept requires a paradigm shift from the a growth-oriented, market-oriented, clergy-centered and funtion- oriented church to a church which is oriented to the reign of God.⁹ This new theological scheme " *Basileia Tou Theou*-History-the church" is "not only Biblically--theologically relevant but also ethically-educationally relevant if the scheme is interpreted in eschatological relationships."¹⁰

The Reign of God

First of all, this reign of God (*Basileia Tou Theou*) concept starts when the Korean churches not only give away what has been called their "market-oriented" and "clergy-centered" church structure, but also the church gives its own rights to God in order for God to reign over all humanity.¹¹ Korean churches are confronted with several "ism", thoughts, and issues right now, and they do not handle these pressures wisely. In this situation, it is necessary for churches to depend upon God's reign that has been imminent

⁸ Un, "Transformative Paradigm of the Korean Church," 210.

⁹ Ibid.

¹⁰ Un, " Christian Education as Historical Transformation," 11.

¹¹ Un, "Transformative Paradigm of the Korean Church," 210.

throughout history.¹² God's presence can be seen in two ways through history, "the paradigm of rule—the judgment and the power of love—the redemption."¹³ This work of God implies that "Christ transforms, liberates through the paradigm of God's rule and redeems history through the power of love, the shape of the cross."¹⁴

This theme is started in creation, is confirmed in Jesus Christ, and is fulfilled in the Second Coming of Jesus. Furthermore, this reign of God includes all nations, all history, and all humanity. Therefore, all churches reflect on themselves as well as repent of their faults in light of the coming reign of God, in the context of presence and witness. Consequently, Dr. Un believes that God will accomplish God's reign with judgment and love.¹⁵ At the same time, as an example of the shift to a new ecclesiological paradigm, the various models of the church such as "institution, koinonia, sacrament, preaching, and service must become dimensions of a more comprehensive structure."¹⁶

Historical Praxis

The second dimension of "*Basileia*-History-Church" is attention to history—

¹² Un, *Sinhakjuk Kyoheoron*, 431-35.

¹³ Un, "Christian Education as Historical Transformation," 13.

¹⁴ Ibid., 14.

¹⁵ Un, *Sinhakjuk Kyoheoron*, 435-36.

¹⁶ Un, "After Church Growth in Korea," 171.

“ ‘history in God’ known as ‘divine gestalt’ or ‘historical praxis.’”¹⁷ In other words, this ‘divine gestalt’ can be understood as the presence of God in history. God’s historical praxis “transcends history” and “yet works within history.”¹⁸ Therefore, history has a new shape “which is reconfigured or transfigured and a power which is creative, directing, shaping, luring power.”¹⁹

Un pinpoints that this new theological paradigm (divine gestalt) demands the Korean churches to make important changes in their practices. Just as God shapes and transforms history, so this “historical praxis” plays a great role in changing the practice of the church. Namely, the church as a witness has the responsibility to interpret historical events and to encourage commitment to the service of God’s Kingdom in history.²⁰ For example, the church, as the proclaimer of this paradigm, needs to understand economics practically as the creative search for an “ethics of solidarity” rather than an endless growth and competition. In addition, the understanding of politics in the practical perspective of church in history is to move beyond power politics, and to become a “servant for human rights and human community.” Likewise, “the understanding of ecology needs to be directed toward the earth not as an arena of exploitation, but as God’s created garden for

¹⁷ Un, “Christian Education as Historical Transformation,” 15.

¹⁸ Ibid.

¹⁹ Ibid.

²⁰ Un, “After Church Growth in Korea,” 171.

which we are utterly responsible as gardeners." ²¹

The Korean church, Un points out, also has to get away from the "church growth syndrome" and "blessing programs."²² Rather, the Korean church needs to practice their faith in order to discern the reign of God in history. Un goes on that this scheme is also linked to both a critical theological interpretation of historical events and a commitment to the witness and service of God's Kingdom in history. Hence, the discernment, interpretation and commitment of the people of God might "become a new nexus of the acts of worship, preaching, sacrament, education/nurture, koinonia, and diakonia of the church as the eschatological community. This is a shift in the church's practical paradigm." ²³

The Eschatological Community

Finally, the third dimension of Basileia is the theme of *Laos Tou Theou*, the eschatological-witnessing community. Dr. Un explains that the theological understanding of the church can be seen in its relationship with *Basileia Tou Theou* in history. Thus, this theme is an eschatological, witnessing community of people of God, rather than an "institution", "mystical communion", "sacrament", "herald" or "servant."²⁴ This

²¹ Un, *Sinhakjuk Kyoheoron*, 436-37.

²² Un, "After Church Growth in Korea," 171.

²³ Ibid.

²⁴ Un, "Christian Education as Historical Transformation," 17-18.

eschatological community is transformed by the kingdom of God, and it exists for the sake of the *Basileia Tou Theou* in history. This suggests that a new church model, based on eschatological theology, is needed by those Korean churches which are currently plagued with the "after church growth" syndrome.²⁵

According to the new theological understanding of an eschatological community, the church is no longer a place where charismatic, authoritarian, and clergy-centered leadership are prevalent in ministerial paradigms. The church, on the other hand, is regarded as the ministerial place of the builders of the community of God's people in history. The ministry of the *Laos Tou Theou*, including the ordained ministry, "embraces all the gifts and callings of God's eschatological people. This represents a shift in the churches' ministerial paradigm."²⁶ Practically, in the context of eschatological community, Dr. Un suggests that Christian education has to be education for commitment among the people of God. This education encourages the eschatological church to engage in the Kingdom of God in history actively "through repentance (*metanoia*, being transformed), teaching (*didache*), sharing (*koinonia*) and witnessing and serving (*diakonia*)."²⁷ This transformation needs to be extended to the fields of culture, politics,

²⁵ Un, "After Church Growth in Korea," 171.

²⁶ Ibid.

²⁷ Un, "Christian Education as Historical Transformation," 19.

and economics beyond the church.²⁸

The Vision of Youth Ministry

On the basis of Un's vision of the Korean church, I will present a vision of youth ministry. First of all, the educator must keep in mind God's reign in this ministry. Without understanding God's judgment and love, educators cannot do any of this ministry spiritually. God's judgment and love are always imminent in the history of Christianity. Likewise, every educator should believe that youth ministry cannot be established by one's own skill, intelligence, experience and theological knowledge. On the contrary, one should confess that youth ministry can only be performed and fulfilled within God's judgment and love. As a starting point of youth ministry, this confession enables youth ministers to transform the church education context for the future.

The second dimension of a vision is eschatological hope for youth ministry in history. History is neither progressive history nor circular history. On the contrary, God's future for history is imminent throughout history and is achieved when it heals and transforms the current context of Christianity. This theme leads the churches to have responsibility toward their practice in order to fulfill the Kingdom of God.

Therefore, youth ministry should try to transform trite and aimless church education contexts. Youth ministry can make a great effort to give students opportunities to participate in practices that contribute to the Kingdom of God in the imminent

²⁸ Ibid., 19.

historical situation. These may include splendid service, Bible study, prayer, praising and outreach programs.

Finally, It is necessary for both educators and students to regard themselves as agents to fulfill the eschatological community. In other words, both educators and students, as the people of God, are not merely in teacher and student relationships, but are coworkers and witnesses of the Kingdom of God in history. Educators need to encourage students to be actively involved in Christian ministry. Thus, both educators and students are enabled to think of themselves as redeemers for transforming the church, family, society and nation in history. Therefore, youth ministry does not just stay in stagnation, but proceeds to contribute to the Kingdom of God.

To put it another way, youth ministry has two dimensions: "Exodus, which is the experience of liberation—being transformed and finding freedom in God's promise; and Exile, which is the experience of pilgrimage yet witnessing of the reconciling love of the cross."²⁹ In the role of Exodus, youth ministry can inspire the experience of spiritual, psychological, and physical freedom, while transforming the church education context in history. At the same time, youth ministry has also the role of Exile, that is, to witness to God's love in the present throughout the world while pursuing this ministry.

Conclusion

Youth ministry is not easy work. In particular, identity formation is not easily

²⁹ Ibid.

achieved in a day. It has to do with forming youth and participating with youth in the Kingdom of God.

Many pastors and educational directors in Korea are already aware of the importance of youth ministry in relation to their cultural context. Hence, they try to understand the culture and family situation of their youth. In addition, they seek to find suitable programs for youth to cultivate their character, spirituality and open-mindedness to others. Eventually, youth ministry in the Korean context will enable youth to identify who they are, to feel free to expose themselves, and to pursue their vision.

One of the Korean proverbs I like is this one: “A good beginning is half done already.” Similarly, youth ministry, even if it is hard to fulfill, just has to be done. Consider the Chinese proverb, “A journey of 1,000 miles starts with a single step.” Youth ministry requires patience as it attempts to offer youth a hand in developing their identity and vision for the future.

Finally, a famous poem by Dietrich Bonhoeffer entitled “Who Am I?”³⁰ offers for us today a summary of the young person’s pilgrimage:

Who am I?

Am I then really that which men tell of?
Or am I only what I myself know of myself?

.....

Who I am? They mock me, those lonely questions of mine.
Whoever I am, Thou knowest, O God, I am thine!

³⁰ Dietrich Bonhoeffer, *The Cost of Discipleship*, trans. R. H. Fuller (New York: Macmillan, 1957), 15-16. Cited in David Ng, *Youth in the Community of Disciples* (Valley Forge: Judson Press, 1984), 45-46.

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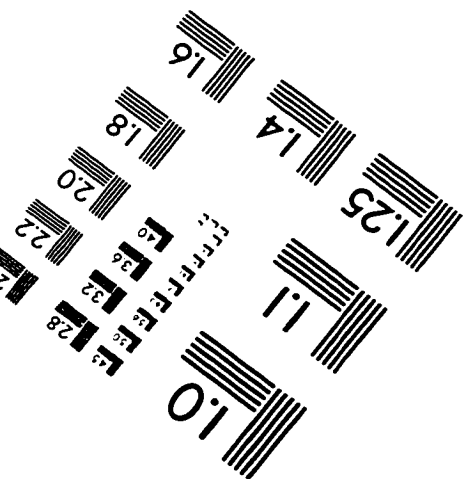
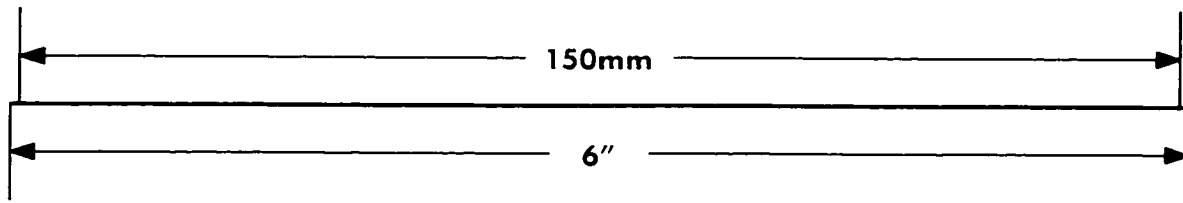
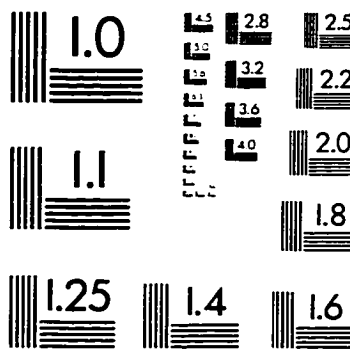
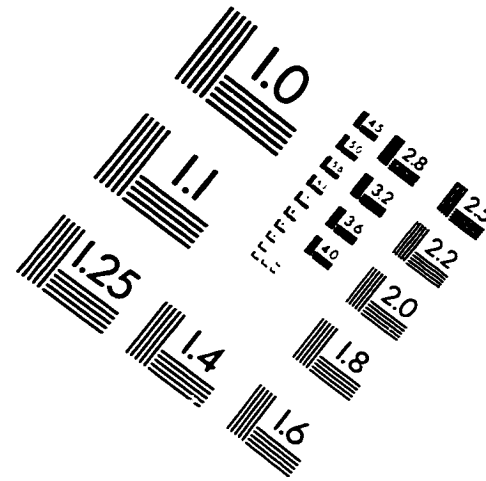
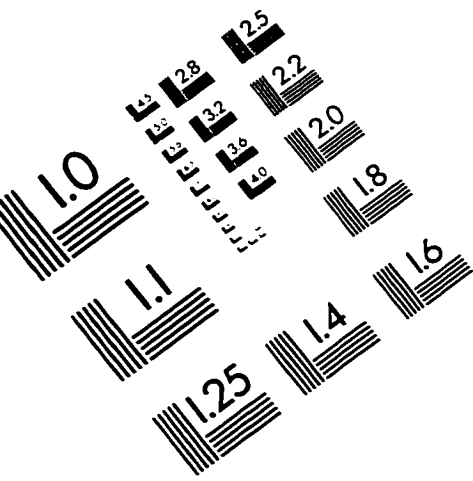
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